Rugby Union England 14 South Africa 24

# It's back to the past for England

**Robert Armstrong at Twickenham**

FAR from entering a brave new world of running rugby, England tumbled back to the bad old days of the mid-eighties with a shambolic performance against the rampant Springboks.

Jack Rowell's patchwork side could easily have conceded 50 points as his uneasy mixture of veterans and ingenues struggled to achieve the pattern and authority that used to be England's hallmark.

It is an open question whether the manager will make sweeping changes for next month's international against Western Samoa after three successive defeats, England's worst sequence since 1987-88.

There are also serious doubts about Rowell's capacity to sort out the muddle and confusion that has reduced England to an embarrassing shadow of last season's Grand Slam side, lacking even elementary skills. Now that Test rugby has become a professional sport, it is fair to ask whether Will Carling's raggle-taggle outfit is really worth the substantial sums on offer from the Rugby Football Union for playing six matches this season.

At the weekend, it emerged that the squad will receive an extra £300,000 for "commercial work" on behalf of Twickenham, boosting their earnings to well over £40,000 a man, including £2,000 for each game.

Perhaps the RFU secretary, Tony Hallett, ought to think twice about handing out generous contracts, which the players have not yet signed, to a bunch of bumbling incompetents who found it hard to string two decent passes together or make a solid first-time tackle. The unseemly whingeing of the England squad over Springbok contracts worth £140,000 a man overlooks the fact that the world champions are outstanding value for money.

One suspects that under the business-orientated influence of Carling himself, who admitted last week that he "cannot afford to tour", the England squad have become preoccupied with money and contracts to such a degree that they cannot focus properly on the job in hand.

Twickenham must take much of the blame for this sad loss of perspective, obsessed as it is with switching the Five Nations to May in order to make yet more millions from the sale of television rights.

Certainly one had a twinge of sympathy for the frustrated punter in the East Stand who, having made his contribution to the £1.8 million gate revenue, demanded angrily: "Come on, you useless lot, do something."

No doubt the unwise verbal posturing of Mike Catt, who had roundly criticised both Francois Pienaar and Rob Andrew, stoked up pre-match expectations to an absurd level, yet England supporters had a right to see basic organisation and a workable game plan in action.

The immense value of Andrew's precisely crafted tactics down the years was underlined by Catt's wayward kicking and sloppy distribution which time and again delivered possession back to the Springboks. As Rowell admitted: "We hardly had a squeak out of Mike when we needed him. I hope we've learned a hard lesson."

Unfortunately Catt's was only one of several ill-judged performances: Rory Underwood put on a nostalgic horror show in defence, Andy Robinson got involved in a fruitless dog-fight, Jeremy Guscott chased up blind alleys and Carling huffed and puffed to minimal effect until he had to be carried off.

It is impossible to believe England would have been wholly devoid of passion or technical control up front had Brian Moore and Dean Richards been there to lay down the law to aberrant team-mates.

Still, Rowell must look to the future by promoting younger men, which means replacing the disappointing Victor Ubogu with Graham Rowntree to stiffen the pack and giving another Leicester forward, Neil Back, an extended run to develop the flexible link with the midfield trio that England desperately need.

Among the few positive features of England's afternoon were the throw-in of the new cap, Regan, which ensured plenty of line-out ball from Johnson and Bayfield, the powerful driving of Clarke at No 8, and the strength and intelligence of Hopley. De Glanville, too, made out a persuasive case for taking Guscott's place when he came on as a replacement and scored an excellent late try with his first touch.



No way through for Carling . . . the England captain digs in, but the South African front line prove tough opposition PHOTO. TONY EDENDEN

Scotland 15 W Samoa 15

# Hope lies with Shepherd

**Gordon Lyle at Murrayfield**

SCOTLAND may have found in Rowen Shepherd a full-back capable of at least partly plugging the gap left by Gavin Hastings's retirement, but that was the only comfort they could take from the draw with Western Samoa.

Indeed they would have been on the wrong end of the most embarrassing scoreline in their history had Darren Kellett converted the first of two Western Samoan tries, by George Leaupepe, and had the visitors not conceded a rash of penalties in promising situations.

Scotland failed to register a try and had to rely on Mike Dods, who kicked five penalties out of seven attempts, for their points.

Their new skipper, Rob Wainwright, was more inclined to cite rustiness to explain the below-par display, including weak first-time tackling.

It will be with some uncertainty that the Scots confirm Wainwright as captain for the start of the Five Nations series, to which only Shepherd of three new caps can look forward with any confidence.

Scotland lacked the rhythm of the Samoans, among whom the centre Leaupepe and winger Brian Lima were prominent and Sam Kaleta grabbed the late try that enabled Kellett to add an equalising conversion to a first-half penalty.

## Cryptic crossword by Araucaria

**Across**

7 Fool in choir composed of birds (8)
9,10 Tell police about a communist if you want fair treatment . . . (6,4)
11 . . . 500 more get enough to eat (but not King Arthur's knights?) (6,4)
12,14 Skulduggery by Scotsman with crucial agenda (6,8)
15 Finish plunder, say, and weaken (6)
17 Law of little 9s? (6)
20,22 Tree containing material for pulling locomotive (8,6)
23 Standard apparatus for producing whisky is stationary (5-5)
24,25 Fulmar gets carried away by warm current (4,6)
26 Snake-eater, takes deer round on string (8)

**Down**

1 Tenure following thatching with short break in it (8)
2 See 24 down
3 Sort of cough caused by scythe (6)
4 Sort of coffee points to papers getting round (8)
5 Mountain characters entertained by knight at Chinese party (10)
6 Famous people honour School (6)
8 Remains of 11? Golly! (6)
13 Sound of lethal bikes encountered with frequency (10)
16 Laborious painting in book (8)
18 Lain off in container to prepare for navigation? (8)
19 Week in 14 (6)
21 Corrosion corroded? Go round in circles (6)
22 Studios promoting 'ealth (6)
24,2 14 asset related to Buthelezi (8)

**Last week's solution**

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France 12 New Zealand 37

# Kiwis power it for Mains

**Ian Malin in Paris**

EVEN Laurie Mains, not one of the world's most happy-go-lucky characters, must feel like smiling now. The All Blacks coach goes off into the sunset with another proud record intact: New Zealand have never lost a Test series in France.

"I'll retire happy after that performance," he said. "It was one of the great Test victories." Indeed it was. To paraphrase Brian Moore, this win, especially coming after the previous weekend's ignominious defeat, was as brilliant as it was brutal.

Victory for France would surely have meant canonisation for Phillipe Saint-André. France's captain has described himself as more "wild boar than feline", but he began this game as he ended in Toulouse, with a marvellous try. He finished with an even better one, but the All Blacks were determined the little wing should not become the first man to lead a side to two successive series wins against them.

From the moment Eric Rush cancelled out Saint-André's try, with a swerving run from the halfway line after 15 minutes, New Zealand were unstoppable. Jean-Claude Skrela, the French coach, described the next 25 minutes as the best he had seen from a Test side.

The New Zealand captain, Sean Fitzpatrick, was raked by a French boot in a ruck, after which the game often teetered on the edge of open warfare. Fitzpatrick was warned for exacting revenge on his opposite number De Rougemont and no end of punches and kicks flew, but amid the mayhem the rugby was magnifique.

The All Blacks' front five provided quick possession to run in three more excellent second-half tries. Adventure was the byword for both teams, for both Mains and Skrela believe in attacking with the ball in hand. New Zealand, though, attacked from a position of strength, France, 20-5 down at half-time, more out of necessity.

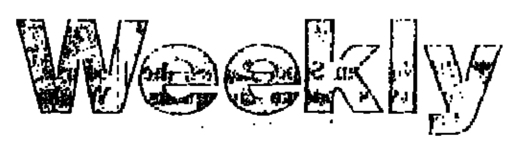
A quarter of an hour after the interval Thomas Castaignède elected to run the ball from his own line when Simon Culhane's penalty struck an upright, but France fatally lost possession and the lock Ian Jones plundered a try that settled the game. Two quite explosive scores by the outstanding Glen Osborne and Jonah Lomu then put the All Blacks out of reach.

Culhane's pin-point penalty kicking in the first half evoked memories of Grant Fox. Five times he punished the French for persistent offside offences, paving the way for the All Blacks' biggest win over France since 1961.

Justin Marshall, making his debut at scrum-half here, was outstanding. His quick hands and speed off the mark gave Lomu and Co the opportunity to exploit space.

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*The* **Guardian**



Vol 153, No 23
Week ending December 3, 1995

# Nato's Bosnia force ready to deploy

**Guardian Reporters**

ADVANCE units of the 60,000-strong Nato force to implement the Bosnia peace accord initialled last week could be deployed by the weekend, Nato military planners said on Monday.

Nato defence ministers were due to meet in Brussels later this week to approve an "action plan", including detailed rules of engagement governing when troops can open fire, and the deployment of 13,000 British troops.

Military control will switch from the United Nations to Nato four days after the peace agreement is signed, provisionally scheduled for a Paris conference on December 13-14.

Details of the Nato deployment emerged as President Bill Clinton spoke to the American people in a powerful 25-minute address to win public and political support for the dispatch of 20,000 US troops as part of the Nato force. "The mission is clear and limited. Our troops are strong and well prepared," he said.

Vowing US troops would have the authority to protect themselves, the president said he took full personal responsibility for any American losses. "We will fight fire with fire — and then some," he said. "This will be a mission with muscle."

Mr Clinton's speech had barely ended when the Republican leader, Senator Robert Dole, in effect withdrew the threat of congressional opposition to the Bosnian mission and pledged: "We will support the troops."

It was a moment of political triumph for Mr Clinton, winning over the most dangerous figure in Congress, but also a moment of intense political risk. If the mission goes wrong and US casualties mount, the beneficiary would be the Republican presidential front-runner, Mr Dole.

Some 2,500 Nato soldiers are on standby to fly to Bosnia and Croatia to set up field headquarters and prepare for tens of thousands of combat troops who will be sent to the region over the next few weeks by Nato members, Russia, and a number of east European and Islamic states.

The chairman of the US joint chiefs of staff, General John Shalikashvili, said in Brussels that, if threatened, the peace implementation force (I-For) would be able to open fire first in some cases. He said the greatest danger to the force, other than potential attacks by rogue elements, was from accidents and the threat from snipers and landmines.

The Nato meeting will be preceded by a meeting between the US defence secretary, William Perry, and his Russian counterpart, General Pavel Grachev, to try to agree arrangements for the political control of what will be a Nato-run military operation.

Last week, after 21 days of bitter wrangling at an air base near Dayton, Ohio, President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia, Bosnia's President Alija Izetbegovic and President Franjo Tudjman of Croatia initialled the hard-won text of 65 pages, 11 annexes and scores of detailed maps.

Under the plan, Bosnia nominally remains one state with a single elected president and parliament, and a unified Sarajevo as its capital. But the territory is divided into two virtually equal sections comprising a Bosnian-Croat federation and a distinct Bosnian Serb republic.

The Bosnian government won a key demand: a ban on all indicted war criminals from political life. Rebel Serb leaders Radovan Karadzic and General Ratko Mladic both face war crimes charges at The Hague.

Bosnians also won a guaranteed right of return for all refugees and freedom of movement throughout the new state.

The Serbs' reward came when the UN Security Council approved the lifting of economic sanctions against rump Yugoslavia and a lifting of the regional arms embargo.

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TUDJMAN
MILOSEVIC
IZETBEGOVIC

Comment, page 12
Washington Post, page 16

# Major blamed as Irish peace process stalls

**Patrick Wintour and David Sharrock**

RELATIONS between London and Dublin reached their most acrimonious pitch since the IRA ceasefire 16 months ago, as the two sides indulged in day-long mutual recrimination on Monday over their failure to agree the next stage of the peace process in advance of President Clinton's visit to Britain and Ireland this week.

The chief cause of the breakdown was continued British insistence that the IRA make a start to the decommissioning of weapons before Sinn Fein be allowed to join all-party talks.

Dublin accused London of "cynical manipulation" and seeking "to dump the blame" on the Irish prime minister, Mr Bruton, for the failure to reach an agreement. London implied Dublin had backtracked in weekend talks on previous agreements, including a commitment not to refer the future of British army weapons to a proposed international commission.

Downing Street claimed that Mr Clinton fully supported the British position, but the Government is extremely nervous that the US president may openly refuse to back the British position on the need for a start to decommissioning by the IRA.

In Washington, there has been mounting gloom over the prospects for Mr Clinton's visit. Alarmed at the unravelling of the peace process, the White House was hoping to broker new direct talks between London and Dublin, possibly this weekend when John Major, Mr Bruton, and Mr Clinton will be

continued on page 9

# British troops face threat from Islamic fighters

**Julian Borger in Zenica**

A VENDETTA against Britons pursued by Muslim mojahedin fighters in central Bosnia threatens to trigger an armed clash when Nato forces arrive to enforce the Balkan peace deal.

An estimated 1,000 mojahedin volunteers from Afghanistan, the Middle East and Africa have become a law unto themselves across a large swath of highlands around the towns of Zenica, Tesanj and Zavidovici.

The region has become a no-go area for aid workers, particularly Britons, since a mojahedin-trained Bosnian fighter was shot dead by a British soldier in October. Islamic zealots vowed to kill four Britons in revenge.

Aid agencies in the area have pulled out British staff after their houses and flats were daubed with death threats. Even Bosnian Muslims working for British organisations have been threatened.

Last month, two New Zealand UN officers were detained by the mojahedin, who mistook their insignia for British markings. They were released after four hours, and were told the fighters still wanted British blood.

Under the terms of the peace agreement, due to be signed in Paris later this month, all foreign combatants have to leave the country within 30 days. There is uncertainty about whether the mojahedin will go quietly. "We don't know who controls them and who can tell them to go," one aid official in Zenica said.

Many arrived posing as relief officials from the Middle East and hold UN identity cards. Others carry forged western passports. Some came for money, but many seek martyrdom and may savour a confrontation with Nato troops.

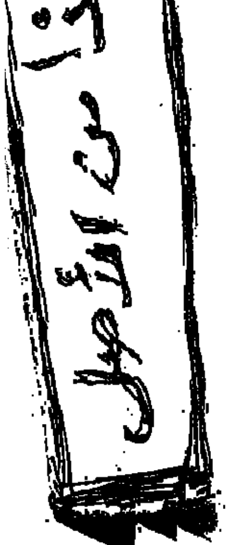


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# Wake up, Abacha, the world is passing you by

*THE* Nigerian Super Eagles, the continent's football champions, are heroes in every West African town. But nobody cried when South Africa withdrew their invitation to a four-nation football tournament in October. Nigeria is very unpopular just now — not just because General Sani Abacha hanged the Ogoni militants, but because he is seen as a traitor to the progress of West Africa.

What a delicious irony: South Africa is now leading a campaign for sporting sanctions against Nigeria! "Delicious" = "bitter" for Miss Nigeria, who was banned on November 18 by Nelson Mandela himself from taking part in the Miss World finals. And the very next day, the Secretary General of the ANC proposed an oil embargo. That would really hurt the military — which is why Britain and America will not follow suit. "Get the (S)hell out of Nigeria" scream posters outside Shell garages in Britain.

If there were a vote on it, West Africans would support oil sanctions against Gen Abacha. Nigeria is our natural leader, and we are especially bitter against the regime which has let Nigeria and all the rest of us down. When Nigeria bravely led an African peace force into Liberia, we were proud that we were able to offer an African solution. And even if the Nigeria-led peace force has not found a solution so far, it has done no worse than the Franco-British force in Bosnia, and better than the Americans in Somalia. Nigeria could be, should be, leading Africa, as the Super Eagles did in the World Cup when Italy just beat them in extra time . . . and everyone from Cape Town to Cairo was perched on the edge of their seats, cheering for Africa. In those days, of course, we knew the Hausa, the Yoruba, the Ibo, but none of us had heard of the Ogoni.

Where is Nigerian leadership now? Every country in the sub-region now has a democratic or semi-democratic regime, apart from Liberia, Sierra Leone, Gambia . . . and Nigeria. In Cameroon and Togo, their semi-democracy may be pretty thin, but at least it is a step away from outright repression.

One result is that our West African common market has nowhere to go. At the very moment when the sleeping economic force of South Africa is waking up, the Nigerian giant is paralysed. Look at the dynamism of economic South Africa, as it moves into tourism in Botswana and Namibia, takes over aviation in Tanzania and Uganda, and invests in the raw materials of West Africa. Would you believe that in the relatively tiny country of Mali, there are already six gold mining concessions sold to South African companies. Wake up, Abacha! The world is passing you by.

*Robert Lacville,*
*Bamako, Mali*

---

*FOR HOW* much longer are human rights and values to be sacrificed for cash?

Politicians everywhere would be well advised to remember that their job is essentially to improve life, and not simply to make money. Although British politicians would argue that a £333 million profit from exports to Nigeria improves life for them, an international community that tolerates abuse of humans is not a healthy one.

This policy of short-term gain, worryingly prevalent in industrialised countries, only guarantees misery in the long term. The international community (politicians and people) must find the courage to embrace the spirit of Ken Saro-Wiwa and instigate an effective resistance against tyranny and misery that can not be quelled by money or threats, or mitigated by unethical companies like Shell.

Life should be, after all, priceless.

*Paul Douglas,*
*Toulouse, France*



## UK Asylum Bill riddled by racism

*THERE* is no policy too unfair, no accusation too unfounded, no proposal too inhumane that the Government will not put it forward in order to pander to racism in the British electorate.

This is the only motivation for Michael Howard's new Asylum and Immigration Bill. The massive drop in successful asylum claims, from around 75 per cent before the 1993 Act to around 6 per cent now, is not an indication of large numbers of "bogus asylum-seekers" but, as the director of the Refugee Council has said, of "bogus refusals".

Howard's proposals, and Peter Lilley's attempt to cut all benefits from 70 per cent of asylum-seekers, are an attempt to use racism to stigmatise asylum-seekers and refugees as the new pariahs of society.

The introduction of an obligation on employers to check the legality of their employees cannot fail to be racist in its implementation. With black unemployment double that of white people, and in some areas of the country reaching more than 50 per cent of black youth, the proposal will deepen the poverty and oppression of the black communities and undermine further good race relations.

*Diane Abbott MP,*
*Campaign Against the Immigration and Asylum Bill,*
*House of Commons, London*

---

*HOME OFFICE* plans to make employers responsible for checking whether staff are illegal immigrants will be bad for business and bad for our communities.

Managers do not have time to be policemen or immigration officers. They want to employ the right person for the job without worrying how big the fine will be if they have been misled over the status of an applicant.

These plans fly in the face of attempts to extend equal employment opportunities. They will deter organisations from employing people who look or sound as if they may be new to the country.

*Tony Morgan,*
*The Industrial Society, London*

## Confusion over Canada's divide

*IN HIS* discussion of Canada, Martin Woollacott ("Nationalism hastens Canada's great divide", November 5) makes the same fundamental error as do the Quebec separatists. In his brief article he refers to "English Canada" approximately 10 times. This is disconcerting, as English Canada does not exist!

French Canada does exist. They are the "true Québécois" with whom the separatists wish to form an ethnic nation in the 19th century European sense. Perhaps 6 million in number, they share 400 years of common history, a common language (a dialect of French), common geography (most of the southern half of the province of Quebec), common religion (lapsed Roman Catholic), perhaps a common genealogy, and above all a common culture and mythology. Coincidentally, they control sufficient natural and human resources to survive also as an economic state.

Much as the separatists and Mr Woollacott may repeat it, there is no corresponding entity in the rest of Canada. Canada is Canada. Canada, including the parts of the province of Quebec who voted for Canada in the referendum, is a modern, cosmopolitan, democratic, new world state made up of a bewildering array of ethnic groups, more or less integrated. Some live in relatively self-contained ethnic communities which share religion, language and culture, whether Chinese, German Hutterite or Inuit. Others of us have integrated into a new world culture to the extent that we may be totally unaware of any identity other than Canadian. Our leaders have names like Klein, Romanow and Schreyer. Our most famous scientist is named Suzuki, our best-known athlete Gretzky. However, we do not think of Wayne Gretzky as Polish, nor do we consider others of us English, even if some of us have some English ancestry and most of us speak a dialect of English.

None of this is to say that Canada is a wonderful, harmonious, multicultural heaven. Canada has many problems, including inter-ethnic ones. It is simply to point out that the very essence of Canada is different from the cultural/ethnic self-definition of the separatist Québécois. The distinction between Canada and Quebec is not a distinction between English and French cultures. It is a distinction between cosmopolitan and ethnic visions of nation.

It is often said that Canada does not understand Quebec. That may or may not be true: I think that Quebec nationalism is relatively easy to understand. On the other hand, it is clear that the Quebec separatists and Mr Woollacott do not understand Canada.

*David Wessel,*
*Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada*

## Health care in Hong Kong

*I REFER* to Andrew Higgins's article "Tory fantasy of far eastern promise" (November 5) and should like to clarify the position regarding health services here in Hong Kong.

No one is denied access to health care, non-emergency or otherwise, and public health cover is universally available to all. Medical and health care are heavily subsidised by government, and the public is charged only a nominal fee at the point of delivery.

The public sector, through the Hospital Authority, provides 90 per cent of the secondary and tertiary care (hospital-based services) in Hong Kong and 30 per cent of the primary care. Of the lower income groups in Hong Kong, 89.5 per cent use the Hospital Authority's services, 73.4 per cent of the middle income groups use the services while 54.5 per cent are from the higher income bracket.

*Elaine Scullion,*
*Senior Planning Manager,*
*Hospital Authority, Hong Kong*

## Briefly

*THE* persistence of the French nuclear bomb programme begs the question "By how much more does France wish to surpass the horrors of Nagasaki and Hiroshima to achieve national security?" Rest assured, whatever comfort they get after the event, it will only last a few short moments.

*Peter Choong,*
*Lund, Sweden*

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*WHILE* Katherine West (quoted by Will Hutton in "Imperial glory is a thing of the past", November 19) may have overstated the benefits of promotion of Commonwealth ties, the economic benefits to Britain and British households of no longer paying billions of pounds to subsidise inefficient agricultural production in the European Union should be taken more seriously. Not only would importing cheaper unsubsidised food and other products from the Commonwealth save Britain money, it would be a far more productive way of enhancing development in Third World countries.

*David Smith,*
*Nairobi, Kenya*

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*JOHN EZARD'S* piece ("Student howlers in a class of their own", November 12) reminded me of some of the more colourful comments found amongst a batch of second-year university exam scripts I have recently marked. In a discussion on political personalities, one student referred to "left winged" and "right winged" politicians (which conjured up Pythonesque images of MPs bolting about Parliament flapping one or other appendage); another, alluding to the granting of the Royal Assent by the Sovereign's representative, suggested that it was the Governor General's job to "ascend" legislation.

*Richard Shaw,*
*Palmerston North, New Zealand*

---

*PROFESSOR WILLIS'S* letter (November 12) about the dangers of lawn bowls is a wise reminder that we should use statistics intelligently. I wonder if he could tell us how many of the victims on the greens are aged in their twenties or thirties and die of a deliberate blow to the head?

*(Dr) Denis Coates,*
*Monash University,*
*Victoria, Australia*

---

*AS SEVERELY* disturbed, near-paranoid, separated mother of two young children, living off the state, who boasted publicly of bulimia orgies, self-mutilation, deep depression and extra-marital sex, would probably have had her children taken into care.

Perhaps that is what Eton is for.

*Jill Aktas,*
*Dhahran, Saudi Arabia*

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# Striking protesters paralyse France

**Reuter and Alex Duval Smith in Paris**

AN ONGOING strike by French railway workers against social security reform plans spread to other sectors on Tuesday, bringing road and rail traffic to a virtual standstill in many areas.

Long-distance, regional and commuter rail services were barely limping along and traffic was very slow, particularly in the Paris area, where motorists on main roads encountered tailbacks of more than 30km.

The government of prime minister Alain Juppé, however, dug in its heels on proposed social security revisions.

"There is no turning back on reform," a government spokesman, Alain Lamassoure, told France Inter radio. "Social security reform is a package. If any one of its elements were thrown into question, its equity would be compromised and the entire package would collapse."

The rail strike, over pension rights and a restructuring of the indebted rail network, entered a fifth day with unions rejecting government efforts to reassure them.

The state rail network SNCF was hardest hit by the strikes. Officials said there would be little or no regional service and only a handful of high-speed trains operating. There was no rail service at all on key routes between Paris and the central city of Dijon and the western cities of Rennes and Nantes, the SNCF said.

In the capital, bus and underground rail lines were also severely disrupted. Only one of every 20 scheduled buses was running and most Métro underground lines were either shut down or barely operating, officials said.

Paris also expected mass demonstrations by workers fearful of reductions in benefits brought about by government efforts to end social security deficits. The unions, the communist-led CGT and the more moderate Force Ouvriere, called for a march through central Paris on Tuesday.

Postal services, schools, hospitals and other sectors also experienced disruptions as workers stayed home either in sympathy with strikers or because of commuting difficulties. In addition, two newspapers, the daily Le Parisien and the sports tabloid L'Equipe, were kept off newsstands by striking transport workers.

This week's labour protests followed a broad public sector strike last week by more than five million people which paralysed France. Workers lambasted President Jacques Chirac and Mr Juppé for proposing budget cuts and tax increases after six months in office to enable France to stay in step with Germany and meet the criteria for a single European currency from 1999.

Paris faced its worst pollution since the summer heatwave, as millions drove to work. All suburban trains were cancelled and the Métro, running a skeleton service in the morning rush-hour, had shut down completely by late afternoon.

At a Paris rally last week — which organisers estimated was attended by up to 100,000 people — the secretary-general of the CFDT union, Nicole Notat, called on the government to begin negotiations with civil servants. Her presence among marchers from the historically communist-backed CGT union was controversial. Last month, she endorsed as "necessary" a plan by Mr Juppé to increase social security contributions.

At the heart of the protests are plans by Mr Juppé for the most ambitious overhaul of the creaking welfare state in 30 years. He has been battling widespread dissent since President Jacques Chirac shelved campaign pledges of job creation and higher wages in October and told the French people they had to endure two years of austerity to bring down deficits.



**Riding high . . . French students converge on Paris to protest against spending cuts** PHOTOGRAPH: JACK DABAGHIAN

Mr Juppé announced last week that his government's proposed welfare changes are aimed at eliminating accumulated social security debts of 250 billion francs ($50 billion) and turning the 63 billion franc ($12.6 billion) annual social security deficit into a surplus by 1998. The changes are to be discussed in the national assembly this week.

Mr Juppé wants all workers to pay a new 0.5 per cent tax over 13 years to cover the social security deficit. He also wants some benefits to be taxable. The most unpopular measure proposed by Mr Juppé is that France's 2.2 million civil servants should work 40 years instead of the current 37½ to qualify for a full pension, bringing them into line with the private sector.

Monique Blanchet, aged 54, who works in a post office in a Paris suburb, said: "I am here for everyone — young and old. We are all under threat. This government says it wants to pull France out of the recession but it is pushing the little people like me further and further into it."

Last week's action was the third in six weeks, and appeared to be the most strongly supported. On October 10 a walk-out by public sector workers protesting against a pay freeze left France virtually paralysed.

Police — who were prevented by the interior ministry last week from joining a march in Lyon — may be among future demonstrators. They want compensation for enforcing the security clampdown which followed the summer's bomb attacks by Algerian extremists.

Even though union membership is low in France — only about 5 per cent of the workforce — last week's stoppage was widely supported in opinion polls.

## Tigers reject peace talks

**Amal Jayasinghe in Colombo**

FIGHTING raged in northern Sri Lanka on Monday as the Tamil Tiger guerrilla leader rejected peace talks and vowed to keep up his fight for a separate state, despite setbacks.

Army commandos backed by armoured cars launched a renewed push towards Jaffna, the bastion of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), after a day of battles left 15 soldiers and 55 rebels dead, according to official figures.

"The Tigers are putting up a last-ditch battle," the chief military spokesman, Sarath Munasinghe, said. "There is a certain number of Tigers trapped in Jaffna. They are getting desperate and ready for a do-or-die battle."

Defence sources said the army was finding the advance tough. At least 65 more soldiers were wounded in overnight fighting. Most of them were hit by snipers, who held up an entire battalion on the southern flank of Jaffna on Sunday. There was no word from the Tigers about the fighting.

Up to 1,000 guerrillas are believed to be in Jaffna, preparing to halt the two infantry columns advancing on the town centre from the eastern and south-eastern sides of the rebel citadel.

The hand-to-hand fighting came as the LTTE supremo, Velupillai Prabhakaran, said over his clandestine Voice of Tigers radio on Sunday that he was not willing to negotiate "at the point of a gun". He accused President Chandrika Kumaratunga of deception and said that the army offensive launched on October 17 was directed against Tamils, the country's largest minority community.

Mr Prarabhakaran appealed for fresh recruits to join his guerrilla forces as the military blasted through the town's booby-trapped maze of streets with tanks. "As long as Sri Lankan armed forces remain in Jaffna, the door for peace talks will remain shut tight," he said.

## Paris sets off fourth bomb

**Paul Webster in Paris**

**FRANCE has defied European Union and world opinion by setting off a fourth nuclear bomb at Moruroa, its Polynesian atomic testing base.**

**A brief announcement was made by the defence ministry soon after the test was completed at 22.30 on Tuesday last week. The test, understood to involve the equivalent of 40 kilotonnes of TNT, was linked to a programme to develop simulated laboratory experiments before France signs a universal nuclear test ban next year.**

**But the latest explosion will harden EU criticism. President Jacques Chirac responded angrily when 10 EU member countries described the tests as irresponsible.**

**Since the first explosion in the resumed programme in July, France has taken diplomatic action against Sweden, Austria, Italy and Belgium because of their criticism and has praised Britain for supporting France's policy.**

**The annual bilateral summit with Italy, due last week, was cancelled by the French because Italy backed a UN vote condemning the tests.**

**If French scientists stick to a scaled-down programme, two more experiments will be carried out in Polynesia before the spring. Originally, eight were planned but after a storm of protest by Pacific countries, including Japan, Australia and New Zealand, Mr Chirac decided to restrict the number of tests.**

**The explosion was the second biggest in the series so far, inferior only to a test to develop a new nuclear warhead for France's nuclear submarine fleet.**

**At the United Nations last month, Denmark, Ireland, Finland, Austria, Italy, Sweden, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Portugal voted to condemn the French nuclear tests. Germany, Greece and Spain abstained. Of the 15 EU countries, only Britain voted with France.**

# Mubarak gags his main opponents

**David Hirst in Cairo**

EGYPT was due to hold parliamentary elections this week in the shadow of President Hosni Mubarak's increasing crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood, the strongest opposition party.

The Brotherhood said 312 of its polling agents were arrested in nationwide raids on their homes on Monday. Other agents had fled before the police arrived.

The interior ministry said it was checking the reports.

Last week a military court convicted 54 senior members of the Brotherhood, the non-violent wing of the Islamist movement: a move widely seen as the climax of a campaign to ensure another overwhelming majority for the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP). They received prison terms of up to five years. "Most of them are reasonable and sensible people," said a secular adversary of theirs. "Bourgeois to the fingertips. I used to run into Dr Isam al-Eryan [the most prominent of the 54] at lunches at the British embassy."

The trial was denounced by most Egyptian political parties, including secular ones, as well as domestic and foreign human rights groups, as unconstitutional, politically motivated and designed to prevent the Brotherhood doing well in the elections — or participating at all, since many of those convicted were candidates.

Apparently mindful of western scepticism, the government has been stressing that the polls will be free and fair. Opposition parties contest this, alleging plans for large-scale rigging.

"In any case, the main point is that there is no compatibility between multi-party, pluralist elections and the notion that the whole political trend is outside the game altogether," said Muhammad Sayyid Ahmad, a leading intellectual.

There is a strong suspicion that it is precisely because the Brotherhood is now so moderate that the government took action.

The Brotherhood often denounces the violence of the "extremists", insisting on its belief in parliamentary democracy. This makes it increasingly hard for the government to deny the party legal status and participation in politics.

For 20 years the Brotherhood has been officially outlawed yet unofficially tolerated. In elections, its candidates used to form alliances with legalised parties, or stand as independents. The Brotherhood boycotted the last elections, in 1990. It believes that the government began the crackdown in fear that it might be successful this time.

There is no doubt that the government's action ends the distinction it once made between violent and non-violent Islamists. Early this year it began arresting the Brotherhood's leaders on charges which showed it no longer tolerated even their unofficial status. It accused them of being in league with the "extremists".

Last week the interior minister, Hassan al-Alfi, carried the new logic to great lengths. The Brotherhood and the terrorists of al-Gama'a al-Islamiya and Islamic Jihad, he said, were "ultimately one".

So far the Brotherhood has reacted quietly. But one defendant said that his trial "sent a message of despair to the people about the result of peaceful reforms".

## The Week

ISRAELI police, who have almost completed their inquiries into the assassination of the prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin, have concluded that it was not the work of a large-scale right-wing conspiracy. They have found that the shooting was planned by the self-confessed assassin Yigal Amir, his brother Haggai, and "one or two others who were not active".

Peres interviewed, page 16

A RUSSIAN MP, Sergei Markidonov, was shot dead by his bodyguard while on a campaign tour in Siberia, the fourth member of Russia's parliament to be killed in less than two years, officials said.

THE Haitian president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, endorsed a proposal that he should remain in office for three more years, but said he wanted more talks with the country's business élite and political parties before reaching a decision.

Washington Post, page15

THE RETIRED Bolivian general Mario Vargas Salinas denied he had revealed that the Argentine guerrilla Ernesto "Che" Guevara was secretly buried at Vallegrande, 750 km from La Paz, after his execution by Bolivian troops in 1967.

CHINA charged its foremost political heretic, Wei Jingsheng, with plotting to end Communist Party rule, a move that could mean the death penalty for the Nobel Prize nominee, democracy campaigner and veteran of labour camps.

Comment, page 12

SOME 200,000 clergy were systematically murdered under Soviet rule in a cycle of crucifixtions, scalpings and "bestial tortures", a Russian presidential commission said.

THE International Herald Tribune agreed to pay $138,000 to Singapore's senior minister, Lee Kuan, to settle a defamation suit.

THE ALREADY tense relationship between the US military and its hosts on the Japanese island of Okinawa deteriorated further with the disclosure that police are investigating claims that a local woman was raped by an American last week.

A ZIMBABWEAN independent politician and outspoken critic of high-level corruption, Margaret Dongo, won a surprise victory over President Robert Mugabe's ruling party in a parliamentary byelection in Harare.

A SINGAPOREAN engineer has developed a boot made of materials usually used in bullet-proof vests, which will allow a soldier to step on a landmine and walk away from the explosion with just a sprained ankle.

# More Ogonis face hanging

**Chris McGreal in Ogoniland**

NINETEEN more Ogonis have been charged by Nigeria's military regime with complicity in the murders for which the environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others were hanged last month amid international uproar, according to judicial sources in Port Harcourt.

As a large-scale police hunt and repression continue in the southern region of Ogoniland, the sources said the 19 were expected to face the death penalty if convicted of joining the mob that beat four Ogoni chiefs to death last year. The prosecution alleges the killings were ordered by Mr Saro-Wiwa.

Further executions would re-ignite calls for global oil sanctions against Nigeria — pressures the regime and its foreign trading partners succeeded in blocking in the wake of the first hangings.

The accused men, who are already in detention, are expected to appear in January before the same special tribunal which sent nine Ogonis, including Mr Saro-Wiwa, to the gallows. The region's military administrator, Colonel Dauda Musa Komo, declined to confirm the new charges but said he expected many more people to be tried.

Major Obi Abel Umahi effectively rules Ogoniland as head of the Internal Security Force in the region. Where Mr Saro-Wiwa once ruled by popular acclamation, the young army paratrooper aims to eradicate the influence, if not the memory, of Ogoniland's most famous son.

In the months before the hanging, Maj Umahi drove the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (Mosop) underground. Since the executions, he has sought to ensure that grief is expressed only in whispers.

"Unnecessary sentiment and emotionalism has been built into this. People who are not well informed are vulnerable to all this propaganda," Maj Umahi said.

Although civilian administrators have been brought in, the major's troops occupy key road junctions and control access to villages. They descended in force for the hangings. Ogonis say anyone wearing black was beaten for making a political statement. Cars were searched, ostensibly for weapons. But documents mentioning Mr Saro-Wiwa or Mosop, including newspapers, were confiscated and the occupants whipped.

Nelson Mandela has warned Nigeria's military dictator, General Sani Abacha, that he is "sitting on a volcano and I am going to explode it under him", *writes Cameron Duodu in Johannesburg.*

In an interview at his home in Johannesburg, the South African president launched a fierce attack on the Abacha regime and said that the democracy movement needed to fight harder.

He also revealed that the oil company Shell had sent a deputation to see him, but said that he would not give up his campaign for worldwide oil sanctions against Nigeria. "I am not pessimistic. My first attempt with Prime Minister John Major was not as effective as it could be. But I have faced problems before.

"In my view we should use the strongest method to show our disgust and resentment at what he has done. We are dealing with an illegitimate, barbaric, arrogant military dictatorship which has murdered activists, using a kangaroo court and false evidence," he declared.

Mr Mandela has warned Shell to "suspend" its £2.5 billion liquefied natural gas project in Nigeria or face action against Shell in South Africa.

Mr Mandela also said that Nigeria's pro-democracy leaders were not mounting a strong enough campaign within their country. He said that the pace and the outcome of any external campaigns against the regime would depend on what the Nigerian people did. "It is not good enough for Nigerian leaders to shout from abroad and not to ensure that the fires of resistance are burning inside Nigeria."

● The Clinton administration has decided against imposing a ban on imports of Nigerian crude oil, the Washington Post said last week, quoting administration officials.

Bad company, page 13



Mother's protest . . . A squatter feeds her child on Smokey mountain, Manila's garbage dump, as police watch the demolition of the colony to make way for housing development PHOTOGRAPH: FERNANDO SEPE

# Rebel jets bomb Kabul

**Suzanne Goldenberg in New Delhi and Reuter**

REBEL jets bombed the Afghan capital Kabul at the weekend, killing at least 37 people and wounding 140 in one of the cruellest attacks on civilians in nearly four years of civil war.

The Taliban Islamist militia's use of parachute bombs — which explode in mid-air, spraying shrapnel — left Kabul in shock. They dropped at least nine bombs, none hitting military targets.

"This is the most barbaric war," cried one man as he watched rescuers cover a two-year-old child, dragged from the dust. "The Taliban are more cruel than Genghis Khan. Even the Russians were not as bad."

"God will not forgive those who committed this," said another resident.

On a street near several direct hits, slabs of concrete, broken glass and twisted metal littered the ground. Distraught office workers, one bleeding from a gash on his forehead, gazed at a pile of rubble that had been their workplace.

In one of the air strikes, a 1,100lb parachute bomb killed 12 people and destroyed three houses in the western Wazirabad district. A similar bomb in central Qalai Fatullah district killed seven people.

"It was the Taliban who did this," said a policeman. "They can't take the city, so they bomb civilians."

The air raid followed two nights of heavy fighting between government forces and the Taliban, an Islamic movement dominated by Pathan religious students. The bombing was the most deliberate attack on civilians since the overthrow of the communist government in 1992 set off an inter-mojahedin war that has killed 30,000 in Kabul.

The Taliban emerged at the end of last year, claiming to be disgusted at the feuding that overtook the mojahedin after they drove out Soviet troops. Since September, the seminarians have been menacing President Burhanuddin Rabbani's government from Kabul's southern outskirts. They have defied efforts by the United Nations to find a peaceful solution, and vowed to install Islamic rule by force.

The air raids came a day after the defence ministry said the government had captured several areas from the Taliban in mountains east of Kabul over the weekend.

A ministry spokesman said the government also hoped to cut the supply lines to the Pul-i-Charki prison, nine miles east of Kabul seized by the rebels last week. It lies near the Kabul-Jalalabad road, the last remaining artery that supplies the capital with food and fuel.

In the past year the rebels, who have benefited from a loose alliance with anti-government warlords in the north and east of the country, have seized control of more than a third of Afghanistan. The Afghan government has accused Pakistan of supporting the rebels.

# China's war games threaten Taiwan

**Andrew Higgins in Hong Kong**

CHINA has escalated military threats against Taiwan with large-scale exercises involving live shelling of beaches, an assault by tanks and the first display of new Russian Su-27 fighters.

In a clear attempt to influence the outcome of parliamentary elections in Taiwan this week, Chinese state television broadcast extensive footage of what amounted to a mock invasion by the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

China, which considers Taiwan a rebel province, calculates that such a display of military power will scare voters away from pro-independence candidates. Beijing has repeatedly threatened to invade if Taiwan declares independence.

Taiwan's president, Lee Teng-hui, responded at the weekend by calling on the island's 21 million inhabitants to stick together. Other officials accused Beijing of trying to derail Taiwanese democracy.

The PLA war-games centred on Dongshan Island off China's south-eastern Fujian province, which faces Taiwan. "This is because the terrain, climate and waters of Dongshan Island are exactly like those in Taiwan," said the Beijing-controlled Hong Kong newspaper Wen Wei Po.

Chinese television showed aircraft, battleships, tanks, marines and paratroopers taking part in a combined assault on beaches controlled by the "blue army" — code for Taiwanese forces.

"Our military has the determination and the capability to safeguard national sovereignty and territorial unity," it said.

China has held 13 military exercises this year, including missile tests off the Taiwan coast, but none was reported in such detail by Beijing's tightly controlled media.

The latest muscle-flexing follows reports that the Communist Party's central military commission has set up a new joint command centre in Fujian to prepare for possible action against Taiwan.

Taiwan has ordered F-16 and Mirage aircraft from the US and France in a effort to redress the military balance, but these will not be fully operational until 1997.



# Tatars seek to reassert their identity

**James Meek in Kazan**

IN SOVIET times the muezzin at the only mosque in Tatarstan was permitted to call out God's greatness with his voice alone. Since communism's grip loosened, the Muslim community has been putting ever more powerful amplifiers in the minarets of a growing number of mosques — more than 600 at the latest count.

Of Tatarstan's 3.7 million population, 49 per cent are Tatar and 42 per cent ethnic Russian. The Orthodox Church and Islam are busy tagging untagged souls.

"We think most of our Tatars are Muslims but we don't judge to what degree," said Mufti Gabdoulla Galioullin, head of the republic's Muslims. "Look at Chechenia. Few people there went regularly to the mosque, but when their homeland was threatened, they rose up and they fought in the name of Allah."

It is a disturbing parallel. The treaty splitting powers between the government and Kazan, which the autonomous republic's president, Mintimer Shaimiyev, signed last year, was supposed to have been as much a triumph of compromise as the invasion of Chechenia was a disaster of confrontation.

But the treaty can be read in different ways. Tatarstan's ambiguous status is at the heart of the most critical issues to be decided by the next Russian parliament to be elected on December 17: What is the Russian Federation? How much power should Moscow have over the regions and republics?

"According to our treaty with Russia we are not a subject of the Russian Federation," said Indus Tagirov, a senior academic at Kazan university and head of the nationalist World Congress of Tatars. "We are a state united with the Russian Federation, that is, two states."

Not according to Yevgeny Lisin, editor of one of Kazan's Russian-language papers. "We are all citizens of Russia," he said.

Some 27 million Russian citizens, nearly a fifth of the population, are not ethnic Russians. Many are Muslim or Buddhist, and many have had their sense of nationhood torn by self-determination movements and the Chechen war.

A Russian tsar, Boris Godunov, was a Tatar. Lenin, expelled from Kazan University, first read Marx here. "Scratch any Russian," said the 19th century revolutionary Herzen, "and you find a Tatar."

But today's Russian residents have protested at the spread of the Tatar language in schools and the growing dominance of ethnic Tatars in the local civil service. This has been met by irritation from the Tatars.

"There are Russians who have lived here for 50 or 60 years, were born here, and who can't even say 'Thank you' in Tatar," said Gusman Khazrat Izhakov, imam at Kazan's Marjani mosque. "And even if they can, they don't say it, on principle."

It is possible to lead a modern all-Russian life here, but it is equally possible to take koranic instruction and prepare for the hadj. Yet the excited coverage the Russian media gave to October's low-level confrontation in Kazan between riot police and about students shows how Russians fear and mistrust Islam, particularly after Chechenia.

# Turkish Islamists aim for power

**Jonathan Rugman in Ankara**

ABDULLAH GUL is dressed in a well-cut suit and tie. The MP may be the deputy leader of Turkey's Islamic revivalist Welfare Party, Refah, but he speaks good English and seems to have been schooled within the political traditions of the West. Yet his message is unmistakably radical, a direct challenge to Turkey's unique status as the only secular democracy among 52 Muslim countries.

"This is the end of the republican period," Mr Gul says flatly. "If 60 per cent of Ankara's population is living in shacks, then the secular system has failed and we definitely want to change it." With a general election a few weeks away, and Welfare performing well in the opinion polls, Mr Gul's message cannot be ignored.

An opinion poll by the True Path Party of the prime minister, Tansu Ciller, puts the Islamists in second place, 3 per cent behind True Path, while other parties rank Welfare first.

Last year Welfare made big gains in local elections, winning the mayoralties of Ankara and Istanbul and 20 per cent of the vote. This month it is aiming for 30 per cent — enough to form the next government.

That percentage will probably be difficult to achieve, because of the vote is fragmented between numerous leftwing and rightwing secular parties, which have not, however, united to combat Welfare.

Fifteen years after the last military coup, many Turks are disillusioned with the failure of secular politicians to tackle their mounting social and economic grievances. Analysts agree that Welfare will attract a large protest vote.

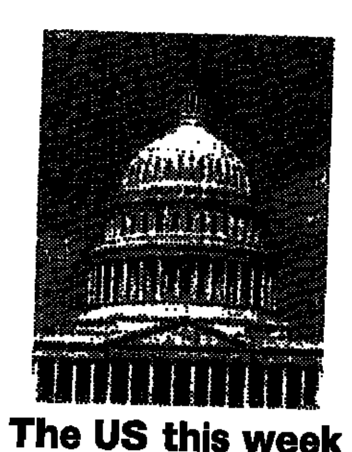
"They are a serious political force," said a western diplomat in Ankara. "Very purposeful, very organised. They are preying upon real structural problems that need to be solved. If Welfare comes to power, will it still be one man, one vote?"

The party says it wants to abolish un-Islamic bank interest rates and pull Turkish troops out of the war zone of the mainly Kurdish south-east, where vague talk of "Muslim brotherhood" between Turks and Kurds has won it much support.

Mrs Ciller is standing on a rightwing law and order platform, with leading security chiefs standing beside her as candidates. She has taken tea with religious leaders and is anxious to present herself as a good Muslim. But in Europe she presents the election as a straightforward contest between pro-western reformers and Islamic fundamentalism. Her opposition to fundamentalism has won her broad secular establishment support.

Oguzhan Asilturk, one of 38 Welfare MPs in the 440-seat parliament, refuses to rule out the introduction of Islamic *sharia* law, because, he says, he does not want to hurt the feelings of Welfare's supporters.

# Clinton hits global path to re-election



## The US this week

Martin Walker

THE American president who has been barnstorming Europe this week is far older, achingly wiser, and the mirror image of the fresh-faced young governor from Arkansas who was elected to the White House three years ago.

He had won by sneering at George Bush as "the foreign policy president" and promising to focus "like a laser beam" on America's problems at home. But his domestic agenda, from health and welfare reform to the promise of a college education for every qualified American, lies in ruins. He has presided over the demoralised collapse of the Democratic party, and its rout in last year's elections the Congress they had ruled for 40 years.

Instead, Clinton comes to Europe as the foreign policy president in his own right, on a victory tour of diplomatic achievements that should culminate in Paris at the formal signing of the Bosnian peace agreement later this month.

His itinerary included taking credit in Belfast for the Northern Ireland ceasefire he broke John Major's heart to deliver, and visiting his troops in Germany as they board the planes to enforce the peace in Bosnia his diplomacy has almost miraculously achieved. Next week, in Madrid, he will sign a new and grand-sounding accord with the European Union which will be said to re-invigorate the transatlantic alliance beyond the old military ties of Nato.

Clinton arrived looking strangely like the man Bush had wanted to be: a president increasingly confident of re-election, facing a parade of unconvincing campaign rivals, presiding over the world's healthiest economy, and above all, the very embodiment of global leadership.

This may be the biggest surprise of all. When Bill Clinton took office as the first post-cold war president, America's global role seemed spent. Looking like a haunting coda to the American century, the inconclusive Gulf war had represented a burden that could no longer be afforded without passing the hat around the sleeker allies.

But now nothing on the planet seems to get done without the ubiquitous Americans. Four years of Balkan war are resolved on an air base in Ohio. Israel and Palestine make peace, but only when their leaders shake hands on the White House lawn. There is a democratically elected president ruling Haiti once more, courtesy of Bill Clinton's soldiers.

The pugnacious sects of Ulster plod sullenly through a non-peace that is better than war, but their serial negotiations take place in the White House office of Tony Lake, Clinton's national security adviser.

The nuclear arsenal of Ukraine has gone, thanks to Clinton's clinching summit in Kiev. The enriched uranium reserves of Kazakhstan now glow securely from the vaults at the Oak Ridge arsenal in Tennessee, thanks to a secret ferrying mission by Clinton's air force. The Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia achieved independence without the looming presence of Russian troops, courtesy of Clinton's diplomacy.

American pressure and South Korean money appear to have forestalled the emergence of a new nuclear power in North Korea. The constant tension on the nuclear brink between India and Pakistan has been held in check by preventive diplomacy.

The prospect of a new cold war with China has flared and died, the communist plutocrats of Beijing bought off with the $30 billion trade surplus they are enjoying with the US this year. As Danegeld goes, it may be cheap at the price, just like the $20 billion that Clinton found to bail out the Mexican currency crisis.

These sums amount to the smallest of change for a gross domestic product that will probably just top $7 trillion this year. Add together the imports and exports, and the booming service exports of software and licences and royalties, and more than $2 billion of that will come from trade.

The US was last year, and will remain this year, the world's biggest exporter. Last year, Japan exported 9.5 per cent of its GDP. The US exported 11.8 per cent of its much larger GDP. Growth is running at just over 4 per cent in the last quarter, the best performance of the big economies. And unemployment is 5.5 per cent, almost precisely the level of interest rates.

On the campaign trail in 1992, Clinton promised to create 8 million new jobs. After less than three years, he is ahead of target, with 6 million new jobs created already. However, too many of them are minimum wage, or part-time, and real incomes remain flat for the majority of Americans. But by contrast with the sclerosis of European job markets, or the stubborn recession in Japan, Clinton has seen both jobs and Wall Street boom, with the Dow Jones stock index topping 5,000 last week for the first time.

When Clinton first came to Britain, to take up his Rhodes scholarship in 1968, the US barely needed to trade at all. After the Soviet Union, it was the world's most self-sufficient economy, in energy and raw materials and consumer goods. And the transformation that has taken place as the US has integrated into the global economy illuminates the real Clinton effect, the foreign policy for which history will remember him.

The boldest actions of Clinton's presidency have been to defy and split his own Democratic party in Congress to force through the North American Free Trade Agreement, and the Gatt world trade pact. At the end of his first year in office, he convened the heads of state of the whole Pacific rim at the Asia-Pacific Economic Conference in Seattle, and invited them to consider a giant free-trade zone. At the end of Clinton's second year, they signed the Apec accord, pledging themselves to develop a free-trading Pacific rim over the next 15 years. Clinton flew almost directly from that summit in Indonesia to Florida, where he had convened all the leaders of the western hemisphere, with the exception of Cuba's Fidel Castro. In Miami they signed the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas.

The prospects for a transatlantic free-trade agreement (much touted by Britain) are moving more slowly, although Clinton's appearance at the European Union summit in Madrid, which starts on Sunday, will give them a push. But put all these free trading projects together and a clear pattern emerges.

The US is committed to a global market based on free trade through the Gatt system. But a series of trading blocs are emerging anyway, based loosely around the dollar, the yen and the deutschmark. They carry a faint but dismaying whiff of George Orwell's awful vision, in 1984, of Eastasia, Oceania and Eurasia, three empires locked in constant rivalry and simmering war.

The elegance of the Clinton strategy is that the Pacific, the European and western hemisphere blocs all have one thing in common; Clinton's America is locking itself steadily into the heart of each one. If all these new pacts work as planned, Clinton will go down in history as the true architect of the post-cold war world.

ONE DAY, despite the isolationist rumblings and the dislocations of Mexico and the jobs exported to low-wage Indonesia, Americans will thank him for it. Just as Ernest Bevin after 1945 ensured Britain a global importance its waning powers hardly justified, by locking Britain into the new institutions of Nato, the United Nations Security Council, and the World Bank and IMF, Clinton has devised the mechanisms which will sustain an American global influence far into the next century.

This is all based on Clinton's central insight into the way the world is changing; that the old cold war system of geo-politics and geo-strategy is giving way to an era of geo-economics and geo-finance. The arms summits between superpowers which punctuated the old logic are replaced by trade pacts. Missiles as symbols of global reach give way to exports which represent both hard and soft power.

Nobody ever accused Clinton of lacking "the vision thing", as Bush once described it. The question has always been of his competence and his resolve, of the length of his attention span and his prevarications until crisis forced him to act. In repeated domestic defeats and compromises, Clinton has displayed a backbone like a ripe banana. Many doubt his ability to stick when the going gets tough.

It was a humiliation for the world's only superpower to duck and run when it lost 18 professional warriors in Somalia, or for an American president to defer to congressional blowhards who insist that the US should only intervene when "our vital interests are at stake". Every country acts when vital interests are at stake. If the concept of superpower means anything, it defines a state with the ability to choose to intervene for the sake of its preferences. And by this test, in Haiti and Bosnia, in the Middle East and in Ulster, Clinton has — spasmodically — justified his office.

It is all hideously fragile, as unstable as the Mexican peso, as vulnerable as Yitzhak Rabin proved to bullets from a fellow Jew. Bosnia is not yet a done deal, as war criminals in Pale strut their vicious defiance. Riots in Port-au-Prince last weekend, and the prospect that President Aristide will not step down as planned in new elections and that the presence of US troops may have to be extended, suggest that democracy may not be quite the word for what has been restored to Haiti.

The wealth in Taiwan, the nerves in Hong Kong and the arrogance in Beijing, added to the outrage of Okinawa at the brutal abduction and rape of a 12-year-old girl by troops from the US garrison, could yet wreck that Pacific rim trade agreement that Clinton was too busy to honour with his presence last month.

And what Clinton celebrates as he turns on the Christmas tree lights of Belfast will be last year's ceasefire. The White House has almost given up on the chance of winning any fudge that could be called a peace settlement to mark his trip to Ireland. He may now try to make do with arranging another summit between Mr Major and Ireland's John Bruton, since they appear unable to do it for themselves. All three will be present at the US-EU summit in Madrid; there will certainly be a photo-opportunity, and Clinton will press for the chance to push it into something more.

Despite the outlandish American attentions, which have glorified municipal councillors and assorted thugs from Northern Ireland trotting in and out of the White House virtually at will, the age-old Irish question remains unanswered and now looks perilously close to a new eruption.

CLINTON is astute and well-briefed. He knows the risks of his policies, from Brcko to Beijing to Belfast, and that his failure to deliver or to keep US troops to Bosnia could rip a giant hole in the heart of Nato, and in his own pretensions as a peace-maker.

And he is nervous of British opinion, aware of a shrill conservative press which accuses him of betraying his Oxford education by destroying that nebulous "special relationship", and of being the ruthless capo of a mafia state in Arkansas.

He is at a loss to comprehend the Thatcherite affront at his well-meant advice that Britain needs to cut loose from the illusion of playing Sancho Panza to America's Don Quixote, and will only be taken seriously in Washington to the degree that it can influence Europe.

Lunch with the Queen, a guided tour of Windsor Castle with the Prince of Wales, an intriguing meeting with Tony Blair: this week's British visit will serve only as a nostalgic prelude to the real business of nailing down the Irish-American vote; of showing resolve in that monstrous risk of bodybags coming home from Sarajevo in an election year and securing 13,000 British troops to share the dangers; of advancing the grand vision to make America the pumping heart of a free trade world.

For the foreign policy president, the Brits are bit-players in the great drama of his 1996 re-election campaign, the one chance Clinton has to redeem the disasters which befell his domestic reforms and his Democratic party, and that bright-eyed promise with which he and Hillary won power three tumultuous years ago.



# Challenge by losers in Irish divorce vote

David Sharrock

THE Irish government's wafer-thin victory in a referendum to lift the state's divorce ban is constitutionally illegal and will be challenged in the courts, a conservative Catholic group said on Sunday.

Muintir na hEireann will launch its challenge this week. A coalition of anti-divorce groups claims the result is invalid because of a legal ruling 10 days ago which found the government's financing of a Yes vote campaign to be illegal.

By the time of the ruling, the Dublin government had spent £500,000. Given that it won by only 9,124 votes — less than half a per cent of the total cast on Friday last week — the outcome was unfairly affected by those funds, the anti-divorce lobby claims.

In spite of the narrow winning margin, and a recount at the weekend which increased the Yes lead by 1,000 votes, the government said it was delighted. "It does reflect a huge change in social attitudes in Ireland since 1986," said the deputy prime minister, Dick Spring.

The last time a referendum on divorce was held, nine years ago, the government was defeated by a two-to-one majority. This time only Dublin, home to nearly a third of the republic's citizens, came out clearly in favour of change, while rural Ireland tipped marginally towards favouring the status quo.

There was relief for the prime minister, John Bruton, who insisted it was "a clear result", in spite of the vote distribution. He admitted the country was divided and said the anxieties that lay behind the sizeable No vote would be addressed. "The debate was important. A lot of people were divided in themselves," he said.

There was no detailed comment from the Catholic church, which opposed change. Its spokesman, Bishop Thomas Flynn, observed that Catholics whose marriages broke down "must not be separated from the Church".

In the nine years since the previous attempt to introduce divorce, governments passed 19 legislative measures aimed at reassuring people about property entitlements and other concerns at the heart of the No vote in 1986.

Anti-divorce campaigners had hoped Ireland would awake a Catholic nation once again on Sunday. In Howth, one of the republic's wealthiest villages, there was bitterness that they had been cheated by less than half of 1 per cent.

"I'm disgusted," said a middle-class lady hurrying out of the Church of the Assumption in the constituency — Dublin North East — which was the last to declare its result. "It's given the next generation a free hand. Marriage will mean nothing to them," she said. "But it's too small a country to be giving my name to the papers."

Only one woman was prepared to be named and admit to having voted Yes. "I got what I asked for and I'm very happy," said Anne Travers. "I'm lucky enough to have been happily married for 37 years, but I feel sorry for others who haven't been so fortunate. They should be given the right to another chance."

Comment, page 12

# Family woes dog Salinas

Phil Gunson in Mexico City

WHEN Paulina Castañon, sister-in-law of the former Mexican president Carlos Salinas, tried to withdraw nearly $84 million from a Geneva bank account using forged documents, the Swiss authorities were waiting for her.

Last week they disclosed the arrest of Ms Castañon, together with her brother Antonio and other unidentified Mexicans, on suspicion of involvement in a drugs money laundering ring.

The Swiss confirmation that the group has been held for the past 10 days marks a further plunge in the spiral of disgrace for Mexico's former ruling family since Carlos Salinas stepped down from the presidency last December.

When arrested, Paulina Castañon was carrying documents in the name of Juan Guillermo Gomez Gutierrez, a false identity apparently used by her husband Rául Salinas, the ex-president's brother, in overseas financial operations. The photograph and signature on the documents were those of Rául.

The Mexican attorney-general's office says it asked the Swiss to freeze all accounts belonging to Rául Salinas, and applied for an arrest warrant against him on charges of perjury and the use of forged documents. He will not be hard to find: since February he has been a resident of the top-security Almoloya jail, accused of planning the assassination a year ago of his sister Adriana's husband, Jose Francisco Ruiz Massieu, secretary-general of Mexico's ruling party, the PRI.

He is also under suspicion of "illicit enrichment". The Mexican attorney-general's statement points out that "in nine years and four months of public service he acquired 21 new houses". Rául is a former head of Conasupo, the government agency charged with distributing subsidised goods to the poor.

Carlos Salinas said on Sunday that he was convinced of his brother's innocence on the assassination charges but said he must explain the allegations of corruption. "If he committed crimes, he must be punished firmly by the appropriate authorities."

The former president, who left office with record popularity ratings, is now a virtual fugitive, although not officially wanted for any crime. He left Mexico after his brother's arrest to widespread speculation that he himself might have been behind last year's other major assassination — that of the PRI presidential candidate, Luis Donaldo Colosio.

The arrest of Carlos Salinas's sister-in-law is bound to increase public pressure for him to be brought back from self-imposed exile in Canada to face questioning in connection with the assassination investigations.

# Regions win latest lottery hand-outs

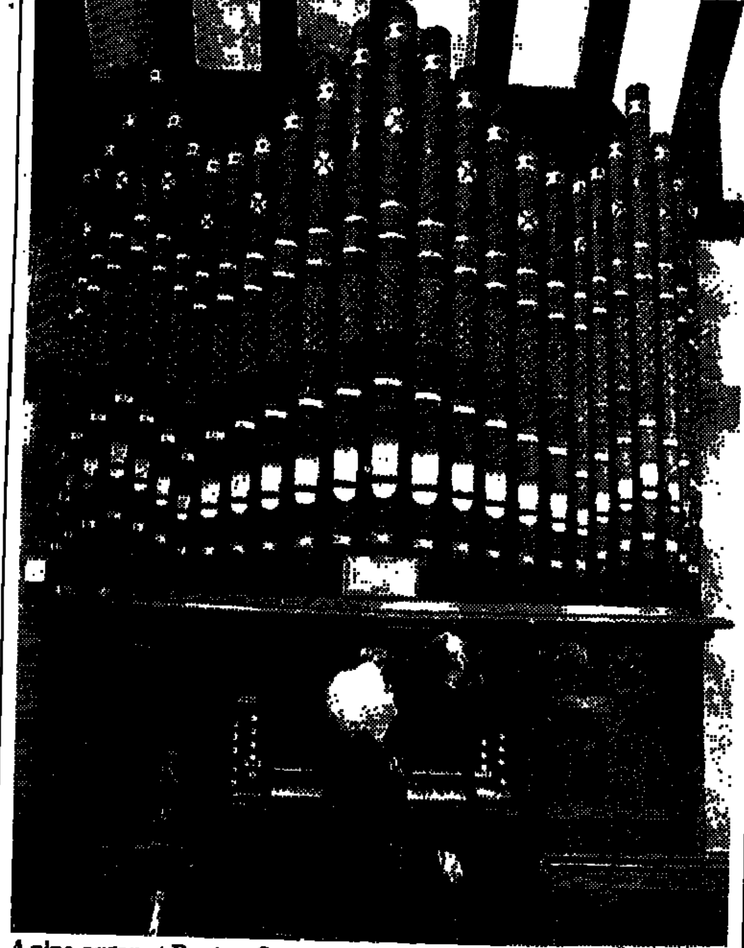
**THE first raft of lottery grants firmly to downplay London in favour of the regions was widely welcomed last week, as arts and heritage groups from Sunderland to north Somerset celebrated funding totalling over £30 million, *writes Martin Wainwright*.**

**Even northerners admitted feeling rather less cross, with the previous skew in the capital's favour changing to bring the biggest hand-outs to the National Glass Centre in Sunderland, Manchester's Contact Theatre, and a Leeds museum commemorating the medical firm which perfected the Queen Mother's new artificial hip joint.**

**Two separate lists of lottery winners were announced, £13.7 million from the heritage fund and £25 million from the Arts Council, whose chairman, Lord Gowrie, conceded earlier this year, after the gift to Sadler's Wells was piled on those for Covent Garden opera house and the Churchill papers: "If I was a northerner, I think I might be rather cross."**

**Last week he said: "This is a long and varied list, covering every aspect of the arts and every corner of England. We are on course to fulfil our lottery remit — to provide the best national and regional cultural facilities possible." The system of allocating heritage grants may be reorganised on regional lines to try to correct the imbalance which left Wales and Northern Ireland with just 1 per cent each of almost £70 million distributed in the first year.**

**The chairman of the trustees, Lord Rothschild, said that while initially they reacted to the applications which came in, they were now considering how to make distribution more fair between regions and by populations.**



A pipe organ at Panteg, Gwent, which gets £10,000 PHOTO: JEFF MORGAN

# Disputes hit British industry

**Seumas Milne**

MICHAEL PORTILLO'S boast as he closed down the Employment Department last summer that the British had "kicked the habit of going on strike" is now ringing increasingly hollow as groups of workers vote with their feet or in legal postal ballots to take industrial action.

Just as last week's unofficial walkout by Scottish Post Office employees has been settled, Vauxhall car workers prepare to begin an overtime ban and a weekly two-hour stoppage over pay and hours.

This follows the wildcat strikes last month at Ford's Dagenham and Southampton plants in protest against what in other companies might have seemed a generous pay offer of 4.75 per cent.

On Thursday, thousands of JobCentre benefit staff are set to stop work over a 2.7 per cent imposed pay deal, after the Employment Service blocked a previous strike vote last month in the courts.

These follow months of industrial action on British Rail and the London Underground and are paralleled by a rash of regional and local disputes.

On Merseyside, firefighters are pressing ahead with a programme of stoppages over cuts in jobs and conditions, while 500 dockers sacked two months ago after unofficial walkouts over casualisation are stepping up their picketing and solidarity campaign.

In London, the country's biggest union, Unison, has called an official strike against Pall Mall, a private "hotel services" contractor at Hillingdon Hospital, which sacked 56 mainly Asian women after they refused to accept a £1 cut in their hourly pay rate to £3.58.

The forecast last September by the TUC general secretary, John Monks, that Britain was in for an "upsurge in militancy" appears to be holding up better than Mr Portillo's view. The growth of industrial action has come from a historical rock-bottom: the 278,000 days lost through 205 disputes in 1994 was the lowest level since 1891.

But even before this year's rail walk-outs, 350,000 working days had already been lost through strikes by April and there is no question that the 1995 total will be sharply up.

Perhaps the most alarming development from the employers' point of view is the revival of unofficial action and an emerging tendency among some workers to reject their union leaders' recommendations. The employers' increased use of Conservative employment legislation has helped fuel the appetite for wildcat action. There have been no ballots at Ford or the Scottish postal service or, less auspiciously, in the Liverpool docks.

None of this has gone unnoticed in the boardrooms that count. Speaking from Ford's worldwide headquarters in Dearborn, Michigan, its chairman and chief executive, Alex Trotman, warned against any return to the "behaviour of the 1970s" in the company's British plants. Jobs would be "placed in jeopardy".

Ken Cameron, the firefighters' leader and TUC executive member, sees a wider pattern in the various flare-ups. "There's no doubt people are saying enough is enough, and the membership is moving ahead of the trade union leadership."

# New head for MI5

**Richard Norton-Taylor**

THE Government last week announced changes at the top of two of the most important agencies in Whitehall's secret world, with the appointment of new heads for MI5 and for the electronic eavesdropping centre, GCHQ.

Stephen Lander, one of MI5's eight directors, will take over from Stella Rimington as director-general in the midst of a significant and controversial period for the agency. A new bill is being drafted which, for the first time, will enable MI5 to combat "serious crime" in addition to countering terrorism, espionage and subversion.

David Omand, the top Ministry of Defence official responsible for policy issues, will take over from Sir John Adye as GCHQ director as the agency faces unprecedented cuts in manpower and the prospect of a Labour government lifting the 11-year ban on trade union membership there.

Mr Lander, whose career has spanned most areas of MI5's work, including international terrorism, was appointed after months of head-hunting in Whitehall. Although Scotland Yard would have liked a senior police officer in the job, it is believed that the favoured police candidates did not apply.

Mr Lander's first important test will be to improve relations with senior police officers concerned about MI5 encroaching on their patch. Questions about how MI5 will fit into a new national organisation to tackle serious crime have yet to be resolved.

## The Week in Britain James Lewis

# Blair papers over policy cracks in New Labour

CRACKS briefly appeared in the polished facade of the "new" Labour Party when the shadow chancellor, Gordon Brown, was accused of making policy on the hoof and going beyond his brief in trying to shake off the party's high-tax image.

In a pre-Budget speech clearly aimed at the disaffected Tories of Middle England, Mr Brown spoke of his plans for a 10 per cent starting rate for income tax. And, to show he could be as tough as the Tories on the workshy, he said a Labour government would also cut the benefits of the young unemployed by 40 per cent if they refused to go on training schemes.

All this was news to many shadow cabinet colleagues, including those responsible for young people, employment and social security. Critics, mostly unnamed, accused him of high-handedness and non-consultation and hinted at splits in the party hierarchy. But the leader, Tony Blair, said he backed Mr Brown "101 per cent", and sternly rebuked those who jeopardised Labour's new, united image by telling tales to the press.

So the cracks were covered over — for the time being. Suspicions persist, however, that Mr Brown is positioning himself as leader-in-waiting to succeed Mr Blair. Nor is Mr Blair immune from criticism that too much policy is made in his own office and that senior colleagues not in the inner "Blair circle" are excluded from decision-taking. The fratricidal tendencies of "old" Labour have not entirely disappeared.

RIGHTWING rebels who make the Prime Minister's life a misery suffered a setback when their candidate failed to win the chairmanship of the Commons backbench 1922 Committee. Moderates threw their weight behind the incumbent for the past four years, Sir Marcus Fox, who easily beat off a challenge by the Thatcherite ex-education minister, Bob Dunn.

The committee is supposed to be a conduit for the rank-and-file's views to the leadership, but all too often works the other way round. Sir Marcus came in for criticism in July when he declared, less than truthfully, that the executive of the '22 committee was backing John Major in the Conservative leadership contest. He defiantly told the committee, after his re-election, that "if you expect me to be less than loyal to the Prime Minister, you will be disappointed".

ANOTHER 10,000 closed-circuit television cameras are to be installed in the nation's high streets, at a cost of £15 million, because the ones already in place are claimed to be reducing the number of crimes and leading to more arrests, The Home Office Minister, David Maclean, said that evidence from around the country showed that people "feel safer in our high streets now that they know someone is watching over us".

Well, not quite everybody, perhaps, MPs have called on the Home Office to take action to prevent security firms from producing and selling "voyeuristic" videos made up of CCTV clips showing members of the public in embarrassing situations. One such video, on sale this week, showed a couple having sex in a doorway. Roger Gale, Tory chairman of the Commons media committee, said this kind of enterprise "plays straight into the hands of those who believe the cameras constitute an infringement of civil liberties".

SCOTTISH Nationalists read from much the same script as the Government and Liberal Democrats when they opposed another planned attempt — by an English MP, John Butterfill — to make British clocks conform to Central European Time. He is proposing a private member's bill which, if successful, would mean British clocks stayed on Summer Time in the winter and moved to Double Summer Time in summer — giving an hour's extra daylight in the evenings.

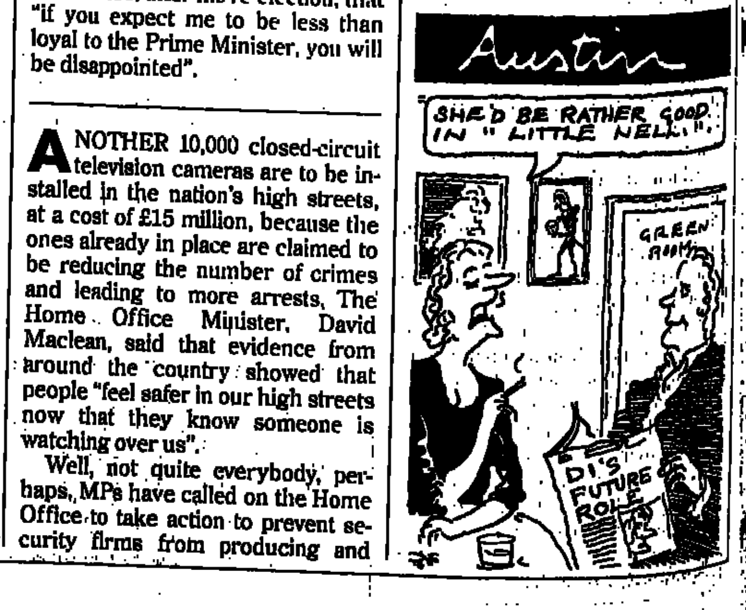
This reignited the furious North-South battle which always breaks out when time changes are contemplated. "John Butterfill is a would-be time bandit, threatening Scotland with daylight robbery," complained the Scottish Nationalist leader, Alex Salmond. He spoke for a country where Shetlanders still need to use their car headlights at 10.30am in December. The change would further prolong winter darkness.

Unlike previous reformers, Mr Butterfill, whose Bournemouth constituency is about as far as one can get from Shetland, is prepared to offer the Scots a concession by allowing them to retain the present system. But the idea of altering watches when travelling north of the border appealed to no one.

HEALTH OFFICIALS expressed concern about five separate clusters of meningitis that have been reported from around the country since October. In the latest, in Lincoln, five people have died.

Meningococcal disease, which leads to meningitis, is expected to appear in the winter, but this year's cases are more numerous and have appeared earlier. Four of the five clusters have been in schools.

The Public Health Laboratory Service thought the apparent increase in the number of cases could be due to better reporting.






## In Brief

**BRITAIN faces a crisis in its relations with Egypt because of the presence in the UK of leaders of the extremist Jihad (Holy War) movement, who were allegedly involved in terrorist attacks and assassinations in Cairo and abroad.**

**THE REVEREND Christopher Brain, the Anglican vicar who founded the rave-style Nine O'Clock Service, has resigned, saving the Church from an embarrassing inquiry into the cult allegations given widespread publicity last summer.**

**TWO MEN received 30-year jail terms for a £125 million cocaine-smuggling operation. It is believed to be the longest sentence for smuggling imposed in a British court.**

**MORE THAN 15 million people queried their water bills last year and nearly a quarter of the drinking water in England and Wales still fails to meet pesticide standards, according to the industry regulator, Ofwat.**

**THE LONDON boroughs of Islington, Southwark and Haringey — three of the "loony left" councils so often castigated by the Conservatives — are to be awarded John Major's highest accolade for efficiency and outstanding public service, the charter mark.**

**A YOUNG mother suspected of suffering from the human form of mad cow disease has died in hospital six weeks after giving birth prematurely to her third child.**

**BRITISH immigration officials have been ordered to refuse entry to members of the Nigerian government even if they have multiple entry visas on the grounds that their presence "is not conducive to the public good".**

**THE European Union's Council of Ministers conceded almost all the ground contested in a legal battle with the Guardian when it agreed to hand over confidential minutes and background documents on agricultural and judicial affairs which had been requested under a transparency code aimed at outlawing official secrecy.**

**KEITH VAZ, Labour's local government spokesman, is facing a fresh inquiry into allegations of intimidation and attempted vote-rigging in his Leicester East constituency party after Claire Ward, a member of the original inquiry team, made a complaint to Tony Blair's office that the Labour Party had been guilty of a cover-up.**

**DEMPSEY, the condemned pit bull terrier freed from a police kennel where she has spent more than 3 years, is to live at the Brigitte Bardot Foundation in the south of France.**

# Libyan exile killed in London

**Christopher Elliott and Kathy Evans**

A LEADING Libyan dissident found stabbed to death in his west London shop received two death threats less than a month before he was murdered, close friends and political associates said on Monday.

Ali Mehmed Abuzeid, aged 54, was found by one of his daughters shortly before 9am on Sunday, lying on the floor of the halal butcher's in Westbourne Grove where he was a partner.

Detective Superintendent Dick Bell, leading the hunt for the killer, said that while it did not look like a professional killing by a Libyan government agent, such an explanation could not be ruled out.

But dissidents and family friends are united in laying the blame at Colonel Muammar Gadafy's door. They claim Mr Abuzeid's murder may be the beginning of a campaign to eliminate opposition leaders abroad amid a surge of unrest in Libya which Col Gadafy blames on foreign fundamentalists and exiles.

Fahad Hafez, a Syrian close friend, said: "He had been very worried lately after a couple of telephone threats. He had even moved house. He told me that if anything happened to him, that it would be done by Libyan intelligence. He was a man of peace who was very active politically, always talking about the freedom of his people from the regime."

Mr Abuzeid, who was sentenced to death in his absence for his role in an attempt to blow up Col Gadafy's barracks in 1984, became a British citizen this year. He came to London seeking political asylum in 1975.

A former accountant from Tripoli, Mr Abuzeid was one of the first opposition politicians from the Arab world to establish a political base in Britain.

Here, he became a founder member of the National Salvation Front, one of the principal groups opposing the Gadafy regime. Two years ago, for ideological reasons, he switched to supporting the main Islamic group, the Jama'a al-Islamiya.

Other London-based Libyan groups said they were surprised by the murder because Tripoli, which has offered to help in the murder investigation, was trying to improve relations with Britain.

"Officially they want to have better relations , which is probably why the murder was designed to look like an ordinary robbery," Milad Hasadi of the Jama'a al Islamiya said.



The halal butcher's shop in Westbourne Grove, London where Ali Mehmed Abuzeid was found dead PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SILLITOE

# Ashdown foils knifeman in street fracas

**Geoffrey Gibbs**

THE Liberal Democrat leader, Paddy Ashdown, told of how he fended off a knife-wielding drunkard as he walked through Yeovil, Somerset, with a local vicar to investigate the causes of increasing racial harassment in his constituency.

The incident happened in the town centre on Sunday night, while Mr Ashdown and the Reverend Mark Ellis were on a fact-finding mission for a newly formed anti-racist coalition.

Mr Ashdown said they were suddenly approached and accosted by three men in their early 20s, and there was a good deal of taunting and verbal abuse. They were joined by an older man who was drunk. Mr Ashdown asked to walk with him in an effort to sober him up.

"Quite suddenly, he turned very aggressive and tried to knee me in the groin. He was very drunk, so I saw it coming, and I moved out of the way, taking the blow just on my inside left thigh. Then he pulled a flick knife out of his pocket and opened it."

Mr Ashdown, a former marine commando, who served with the Special Boat Service, said the knife was held at the left side of his throat. "That, I decided, was just a little bit too far so I pushed it away rather forcibly."

By coincidence the incident was witnessed by plain clothes detectives on surveillance duty following recent racist attacks, and uniformed officers were called.

A 51-year-old man was remanded in custody for eight days by Yeovil magistrates charged with possessing an offensive weapon — a knife — and threatening unlawful violence.

# Major blamed as peace process stalls

Continued from page 1

at the US-European Union summit in Madrid.

It is understood that the new proposals which Mr Bruton sent to Downing Street contained three main points, the most important of which asked Mr Major to show some willingness to look at alternatives to the demand for a token surrender of IRA weapons.

The proposals are:

□ A need to show that there is an openness, without any advance commitment by the British government, to look at another way of achieving a similar confidence-giving effect to that sought in Washington Three (the actual start to decommissioning demanded of the IRA by Downing Street).

□ A need to draw a firm distinction between the Irish and British security force arms and paramilitary arms.

□ A need to have political talks that have real meaning and that will engage all parties in substantive dialogue.

The breakdown in the talks brought an angry response from the SDLP leader, John Hume, who claimed Mr Major was playing games. He said: "Sinn Fein have on numerous occasions made it clear that they are totally and absolutely committed to a democratic process."

Mr Major should have set a date for the start of the peace process and then agreed to put the issue of IRA arms into the disarmament commission, Mr Hume added.

Bertie Ahern, the Irish opposition leader, said Mr Major's attitude was "threatening to wreck the peace", and Dublin should openly seek international help. "The IRA have kept their ceasefire. The British government have not even begun to attempt to organise all-party talks."

Despite the frailty of the peace process and warnings from Sinn Fein at the weekend, the RUC's deputy chief constable, Blair Wallace, said that the force's latest assessment of the IRA ceasefire was that it would hold.

His views were echoed by the Northern Ireland Secretary, Sir Patrick Mayhew, who said: "There is a passionate determination among the people of Northern Ireland that these ceasefires shall not come to an end."

However, Nancy Soderberg, the senior national security official closest to the Ulster negotiations, said: "I see a lot of stories expecting Clinton to pull a rabbit out of a hat in Northern Ireland. And it simply is not going to happen."

But Bruce Morrison, an adviser to Mr Clinton, added to the pressure on Mr Major, saying, "All the parties have done some moving except for the British, which is about where it was seven months ago.

"The British government can stand its ground on the principle of disarmament as an important part of the peace process, but they have been offered some mechanisms to move the process forward which they seem to be unable to accept. I think they should be more open-minded."



# Transmitters' sale to net BBC £100m

**Andrew Culf**

THE BBC is set to reap an estimated £100 million windfall from the privatisation of its transmitters, the Government announced on Monday.

The sell-off of 1,400 transmitters is to be managed by the BBC, with the corporation taking 80 per cent of the proceeds to develop digital terrestrial television.

The BBC's draft charter and agreement, published this week, contains new clauses on taste, decency, and impartiality. The clauses, which will be overseen by the BBC governors — who acquire more regulatory clout — put the corporation on an equal footing with ITV and Channel 4.

Programme standards laid down by the agreement specify that the BBC should show concern for children in scheduling and "not include anything which offends against good taste or decency".

The charter is likely to come into force by early summer after debates in Parliament. Whitehall observers expect them to be "day-long BBC bashing enterprises", but the charter is unlikely to be significantly altered. The BBC welcomed the announcements by Virginia Bottomley, the National Heritage Secretary.

Although it regards the new clause on impartiality as unnecessary, the BBC believes the wording simply formalises the existing position. It welcomed a new clause enshrining the corporation's editorial independence.

Watchdogs on sex and violence have seized upon the taste and decency clause as evidence of the Government's disquiet with the BBC, but Mrs Bottomley praised the corporation and said the charter would increase accountability. "The BBC is recognised as the cornerstone of British broadcasting. Often where it leads others follow. This places a responsibility on the BBC to ensure standards are maintained."

Marmaduke Hussey, the BBC's chairman, described the charter as a vote of confidence.

The BBC, which will manage the sale of the transmitters, is likely to take 80 per cent of the proceeds, with the remainder from government-owned World Service transmitters going to the Treasury. Some observers value the BBC's transmitters at £120 million.



# Fury as Howard blocks race law

**Guardian Reporters**

MICHAEL HOWARD, the Home Secretary, outraged his European counterparts last week by blocking attempts to adopt a common policy against racism which would have included making it an offence to deny the Holocaust.

The move was the last in a series of stands by the Eurosceptic Home Secretary during a meeting of European Union interior ministers in Brussels, which infuriated other member states and in effect vetoed decisions on Europol, the cross-border police intelligence unit, and airport transit visas.

Mr Howard reportedly told the other ministers during a heated exchange over the racism declaration that he would not be lectured by them. Some came close to accusing the British government of racism.

British officials later struggled to say why Mr Howard had objected to the declaration, except to say that a text in English had not been provided early enough for him to be sure he could sign it.

The document calls for international collaboration to resist the phenomena of racism and xenophobia and for member states to adopt effective judicial and penal sanctions to counter them. It also makes clear that apologists for crimes against humanity and violations of human rights should face penalties.

Mr Howard claimed he had blocked the proposal partly because he needed more time to consider the implications for British law. But he also implied that he rejected European Union intervention in Britain's race laws on principle saying: "We have a longer history of laws affecting race relations than almost any other country in the European Union, more comprehensive legislation and better race relations.

"I believe our laws should reflect conditions in our country. Circumstances in other countries differ. They are perfectly free to have laws that meet those circumstances."

The director of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, Claude Moraes, claimed the Government's decision was shameful.

In a potentially more damaging criticism, Germany also criticised Mr Howard. The German Justice Minister, Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger, said: "Great Britain blocked the 'common measure' to combat racism and xenophobia. I can't disguise my huge disappointment at this attitude."

Mr Howard insisted that he had not vetoed the proposals and that he was perfectly prepared to carry on talking with Britain's EU partners about the plan.

The racism row came at the close of a meeting in which the Council of Ministers adopted a new definition of refugee status, which aid groups said would make it much more difficult for those fleeing persecution to find refuge.

Last week's move was followed by an unprecedented attack by the Commission for Racial Equality on government plans to withdraw social security benefits from 13,000 asylum-seekers from January as "anti-black and xenophobic".

The CRE fears that the new regulations will put about 8,000 asylum-seekers out on the streets.

The CRE's intervention follows highly critical reactions to the immigration package from the Refugee Legal Centre, the Refugee Council, the Immigration Advisory Service and the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants.

Amnesty International has disclosed Home Office documents showing that the six-month-old pilot scheme accelerating the processing of asylum applications is to be expanded. The scheme is to apply to about 300 asylum seekers, including those coming from Nigeria, in the next two months. It will allow them up to 10 days after their initial interview to produce all relevant documents to support their claims.

This "short procedure" will apply to all except asylum seekers from Iraq, Iran, Somalia, Liberia, Rwanda, Afghanistan, Palestine, the Gulf states and former Yugoslavia.

# Scots back Spanish in brandy battle

**Paul Brown**

A CIDER brandy business in Somerset faces ruin as a result of "treachery" by the Scotch Whisky Association which has backed a Spanish complaint to the European Commission about the use of the word "brandy".

The Somerset Cider Brandy Company, which started in 1989, employs 10 people who produce 50,000 bottles a year. But the whisky association has supported the application by the Spanish government to the commission to have the description "brandy" banned to protect its own industry.

Julian Temperley from the Somerset company said: "I was amazed at the Scots supporting the Spanish against a traditional English drink. We have a 1687 book of cider making in the company which clearly describes making cider brandy."

The whisky association says the terms cherry brandy and cider brandy used on labels are contradictory and misleading and should be banned. The word brandy should only be used on cereal and wine based spirits.

Mr Temperley said there are brandies like his own in Europe which are made from fruits and they are marketed as such, for example plum brandy.

He had received no objections from the French Calvados region which produces its traditional version of cider brandy.

"The treachery of the Scots is a body blow but we will fight for our business. But if we have to change the label it will cost £100,000 and the long-term damage to the business of the loss of the name brandy could be disastrous."

The Ministry of Agriculture is preparing its defence of Somerset cider brandy at the request of the European Commission.

Peter Lewis, director of the Wine and Spirit Association, has told the ministry that he cannot see how Somerset cider brandy could damage the Spanish drinks industry.

Campbell Evans, for the Scotch Whisky Association, said: "We support the Spanish because any attack on proper description of products is potentially an attack on us.

"We jealously guard the term 'whisky' and resist any attempt by anyone else in Europe to use the term on anything not produced from grain."

# High Court favours cult

**Angella Johnson**

CULT watchers last week attacked a High Court judge for allowing a three-year-old boy to remain with his mother in a religious sect which has a history of child abuse.

Ian Haworth, of the Cult Information Centre in London, expressed "grave concerns" that Lord Justice Ward's decision was largely based on an undertaking by The Family — formerly Children of God — that they no longer practised free sex.

Lord Justice Ward accepted assurances from the mother and the sect that they had turned their backs on the teachings of their late founder, David "Moses" Berg, who was condemned by the judge as a "depraved and sex-obsessed" child molester and pornographer.

The boy will, however, remain a ward of court and the mother has given an undertaking that he will receive a conventional education and upbringing.

Lord Justice Ward said he accepted that "past wrongs had been stamped out", and that steps had been taken to move away from obscene practices.

But Mr Haworth insisted these promises could not be relied upon. "The group has a doctrine that it is OK to lie as long as it is for God and to protect The Family," he said.

Child S's mother claimed the inalienable right to love her god as she chose with no interference from a court of law.

The mother, who cannot be named for legal reasons, had been using drugs before being "reborn" at the age of 21 with the help of Children of God on the hippy trail to Kathmandu.

Gideon Scott, leader of the cult in Britain, said that stringent steps had been taken to ensure child sex would never happen again. "There will be no child abuse. Sexual relationships between adults are their own personal affairs."

# Blow to rail sell-off plan

**Keith Harper and Lawrence Donegan**

THE Government's flagging rail privatisation plans were dealt a severe blow last week when the High Court threw open the whole process to a legal challenge that could delay the sell-off by several months.

The Save Our Railways group, backed by 19 local authorities, rail unions and several MPs, obtained a judicial review into "unlawful decisions" by Roger Salmon, the rail franchise director, to cut services. They successfully argued that the Government had reneged on commitments to maintain existing services after privatisation.

They said that under the terms of the Railways Act service levels in the franchises should have been based on the existing timetable, but many were being cut by a third or more under minimum service requirements laid down for future private users by Mr Salmon. A full hearing will be held later this month.

The Department of Transport insisted that the decision would not affect privatisation. But a more pessimistic note was struck by Mike Patterson, secretary of the passenger watchdog body, the Central Users' Consultative Committee. He said the decision would lead to "further passenger uncertainty". He is concerned passengers will abandon railways.

Meanwhile, the Government came under intense pressure to remove Resurgence Railways as its preferred bidder for the Great Western route after it emerged that Mr Salmon had been aware of the financial background of one of its directors. His office confirmed that it knew that John Ansdell, managing director of Resurgence Railways, had been director of a double glazing company which went bust six months ago with debts of £57,445.

● The Government's hurried sale of Railtrack, the national rail infrastucture group, could raise as little as £1.5 billion for the Exchequer, according to pessimistic reports circulating in the rail industry.

Diana with President Menem and his daughter PHOTO: EDUARDO DI BATA

# Princess faces Falklands rage

**Vivek Chaudhary in Buenos Aires**

A WOMAN whose son was killed during the 1982 Falklands war was bundled away by security guards in Argentina last week after hurling abuse at the Princess of Wales.

The incident was the only time the war came to the fore during her four-day visit, the first overseas trip since last week's television interview.

Lucia Mastroiani, aged 75, whose son, Luis, was killed when the Belgrano was sunk, was among around 50 onlookers as the princess arrived at a cancer hospital in Buenos Aires. She approached the princess and shouted: "Whore, whore, daughter of a whore," before being whisked away.

Afterwards she said: "The Falklands war ruined my family. My son was killed and my husband was kidnapped by the military for speaking out against his death. I have not seen him since. Diana's visit is an insult to [their] memory and the others who died."

The princess later had lunch with President Carlos Menem, the first time since the Falklands war that an Argentine president had met a member of the royal family.

The princess will join the rest of the royal family at Sandringham this Christmas as usual, just over a month after her BBC TV interview.

# Judge wrong over 'killing' of baby

**Clare Dyer**

A MAN who stabbed his pregnant girlfriend could have been convicted of the murder or manslaughter of her daughter, who was born alive but later died, the Court of Appeal ruled last week.

Three judges, headed by the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Taylor, ruled that the trial judge, Mr Justice Holland, was wrong to decide that such a conviction was legally impossible and to withdraw the case from the jury.

The case was referred to the Appeal Court by the Attorney-General, after the man, who is entitled to remain anonymous, was acquitted on the trial judge's direction. The decision establishes a legal principle for the future but will not affect the acquittal.

Lord Taylor, Mr Justice Kay and Mrs Justice Steel dismissed as "misplaced" arguments by the man's QC, Simon Hawkesworth, that their decision could affect doctors if a late abortion produced a live baby who later died. The judges said murder required an unlawful act and a doctor carrying out an abortion under the Abortion Act 1967 would not be acting unlawfully.

The man stabbed his girlfriend, then 24 weeks pregnant with his child, during a drunken row in May 1990. Two weeks later she went into premature labour and the girl was born. She had been injured when the knife entered the womb and had several operations. She died 121 days after birth, not because of her wounds but because her lungs were not properly developed. After the baby died, he was charged with her murder but acquitted.

No one can be convicted of murder or manslaughter for causing the death of a foetus, because the victim must be "a person in being". Murder requires an intention to cause death or serious bodily harm, but under the doctrine of "transferred malice" a killer can be convicted of murder if he intends to kill A but kills B instead.





# 'You will never be released'

**Duncan Campbell and Lawrence Donegan**

DETECTIVES announced last week that they were seeking information about nine more missing young women who had links with Rose and Fred West, after Rose West was told by a judge that she should spend the rest of her life behind bars.

She was taken to Durham prison after her conviction at Winchester Crown Court on Wednesday last week for the murders of 10 young women and girls brought to a close one of the most dramatic criminal trials this century.

The case also spawned a comprehensive investigation into how state agencies missed warning signs of the horrors unfolding in the Wests' house at 25 Cromwell Street in Gloucester.

Mrs West's solicitor, Leo Goatley, said outside the court that his client still protested her innocence and had broken down in tears after the verdicts. He said she would be appealing against her conviction and claimed "intrusive media activities" had blighted the trial.

Mr Justice Mantell told Mrs West: "Rosemary Pauline West, on each of the 10 counts of which you have been unanimously convicted by the jury, the sentence is one of



Rosemary West: she went to jail still protesting her innocence

life imprisonment. If attention is paid to what I think you will never be released. Take her down."

Detective Superintendent John Bennett, who led the investigation, said: "This was a terrible case. It is quite clear that Mrs West must be a psychopath. She and Frederick West were a perfect pair for each other."

In a remarkable development, he gave details, some sketchy, about another nine missing women who had visited or stayed at the West's home in Cromwell Street but whom detectives had been unable to contact. One is believed to be an American girl, Donna Lynn Moore, aged 13, who disappeared in 1973, around the time she was living with the Wests. Detectives issued descriptions of all nine and a photograph of one. The full names of the others are unknown.

"There is no suggestion that any of these people have come to any harm, but for the sake of completeness we would like them to come forward," Mr Bennett said. Reports that another 20 people, including four in Glasgow, may have been killed were pure speculation, he added.

An independent investigation into the West family's contacts with various authorities over the last 36 years, conducted by the Bridge Child Care Consultancy Service, exonerated the agencies of any major responsibility for events at Cromwell Street, but said there were lessons to be learned.

"There is not a child protection service in the UK that, on the basis of the information available, could have predicted that the family was at the centre of multiple murders," the report concluded.

Michael Honey, chief executive of Gloucestershire county council, said people must resist judging the events at Cromwell Street with the benefit of hindsight. "Care agencies are now much more vigilant and better trained. They work together better and their systems have been tightened up. Warning bells would be heard today."

Jeff James, chief executive of the Gloucestershire health authority, said the NHS had had contacts with the family over 30 years but nothing untoward had been spotted. He warned against seeking scapegoats among health and social services staff. "It would have required remarkable perception and abilities to penetrate the web of deceit spun by Frederick and Rosemary West," he said.

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children came into contact with the family four times in 1989 after a reported assault, but took no action after the complaint was withdrawn. Jim Harding, the NSPCC's chief executive, said: "On the evidence before it at the time, which is very different to that available now, the NSPCC did not believe the case serious."

Mrs West, aged 42, was convicted of murdering Lynda Gough, aged 19; Carol Cooper, aged 15; Lucy Partington, aged 21; Therese Siegenthaler, aged 21; Shirley Hubbard, aged 15; Juanita Mott, aged 18; and Alison Chambers, aged 19. She was also found guilty of the murders of her eldest daughter, Heather, aged 16; her stepdaughter, Charmaine, aged eight; and 18-year-old Shirley Ann Robinson, a lodger pregnant by Fred West.

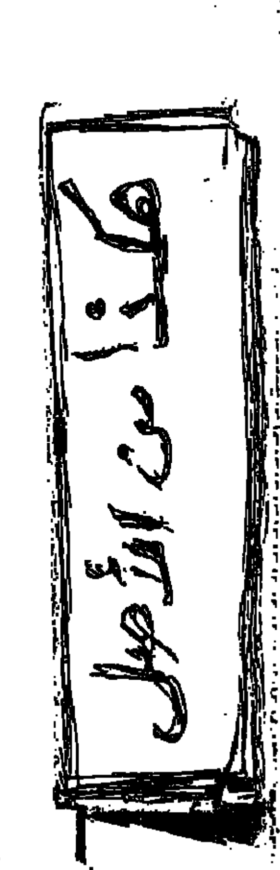
Fred West, aged 53, who was also charged with murdering all 10, as well as his former wife, Rena West, and a family friend, Ann McFall, committed suicide at Winson Green prison on New Year's Day.

Mr Goatley said his client continued to maintain the "love and support" of her children.

Kathryn Halliday, who gave evidence during the trial about her relationship with Mrs West, wept outside the court as she heard the verdicts. "She should never be released," she said. "If they brought back capital punishment, I'd press the button, I'd pull the rope."

One of Rosemary West's brothers, Andrew Letts, said: "I can't think she'll ever understand what she's done to everyone." Fred West's brother, Doug West, said: "I would put most of the blame on Rose."

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# After Dayton, now for the hard part

THE BOSNIAN peace deal is good news above all because a failure to reach it would have plunged its victimised people straight back into disaster. The momentum has to be maintained: the habit of peace needs to be re-learnt: the outside world must reaffirm a wavering resolve. On the ground there is the problem of persuading recalcitrant factions. There must be considerable scepticism as to how "comprehensive" this agreement will prove in reality, but even if only half of it works, that will be 100 per cent more than so far.

The principle of a Bosnia unified in theory but divided into two parts in practice was already agreed in September. The test is how far this has been translated into reality — whether the constituent parts can accept on a day-to-day basis the territorial boundaries agreed, can live in peace and establish economic, social and other functional links. This is much less likely to happen under the present Bosnian Serb leadership of Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic. It may be impossible to bring them to international justice and the provision banning them from political office may only apply to the all-Bosnia government. President Milosevic will need to use all his wiles to ease them out of control of the "Serb Republic".

This set of negotiations has been very much a joint presidential effort involving the three from Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia — plus the other in the White House. This is both a strength and a weakness. The three principals have done a deal which satisfies their interests or at least cuts their losses. President Izetbegovic was the most reluctant because he has struck the weakest bargain. The lifting of the arms embargo is only a symbolic gain. He must console himself with the promise of a unified capital in Sarajevo and a single Bosnian state on paper. Mr Milosevic gains substantially from the lifting of sanctions. For Croatia President Tudjman has clinched the gains he made on the ground with tacit western support. But all three must reckon with local constituencies that may easily become disaffected — or already are.

The other president in the White House also offers a combination of strength and weakness. His show-stealing announcement last week was visibly for domestic effect. It is fine to claim the deal as an a US diplomatic victory: the problem lies in the political need to place limits in advance on the "strong international force" which his troops will dominate. Mr Clinton's allies should utter a quiet warning. It would be absurd to walk away from Bosnia within a year because of a US presidential election. Restoring any normal shape to this tangled map of misery will take much longer.

# The true cost of fearless dissent

CHINA IS changing at a pace that takes even the most frequent visitor by surprise: but some things do not change. The persecution of the dissident Wei Jingsheng, formally arrested last week after he had already been held incommunicado for nearly 20 months, is a reminder just how much of Beijing's political culture remains hopelessly "backward" — to use a familiar Chinese term. It sets the famous economic miracle in a much more sombre perspective.

First imprisoned in 1979, Mr Wei enjoyed just six months of liberty before being scooped up again by the police last year. The foreign ministry in Beijing claims that "proper judicial procedures" are being followed. But what sort of procedure permits interrogation, without access to family or legal advice, leading to serious charges over such a lengthy period of time?

Mr Wei refused to keep silent after being released on parole in 1993 a few months short of expiry of his original 15-year sentence. He met foreign reporters and sent articles to the Hong Kong press — foolhardy perhaps but certainly not a crime even under Chinese law. He denounced the continuing legacy of Maoism in political life and wrote that the people should "dare to insist on their rights". If they did so, he predicted, "the rulers [will] have no choice but to back off". Statements such as this may now form the basis for the official charge against him of "engaging in activities to overthrow the government". As hundreds of thousands have discovered in the past, words are more than enough to justify the charge of "counter-revolution". Whatever the evidence, it can hardly have taken 20 months to collect: Beijing appears to have waited until relations thawed with the US and the chances of joining the World Trade Organisation improved before announcing the arrest.

Mr Wei's name has been a recurring theme in the struggle for political reform in China. Famously in 1979, he urged that democracy should become the "fifth modernisation" in addition to the four types of technical modernisation then being promoted. But his real crime was to criticise Deng Xiaoping on the "Democracy Wall", which the veteran leader was using to attack his own political opponents. Mr Deng marked Mr Wei's name personally on a black list: that was enough — and probably remains the most potent reason for his persecution today. Ten years later, the revival of political dissent which led to the Beijing Massacre began with a petition calling for Mr Wei's release. That enraged the authorities even more. The same call has been revived by protesting intellectuals this year.

Mr Wei typifies a tradition of fearless dissent, going back to the early decades of this century, which is much more threatening to the regime than the critiques of exiled intellectuals and former student activists. Though less well-known than some of these, his is the authentic voice of protest which may well be recognised before long by the Nobel peace prize committee. France and Germany have already expressed their dismay. Britain and the other European Union countries should do no less. This pointless persecution hurts the Chinese government as much as the brave voices that are silenced.

# Ireland opts for cautious divorce

"IF THERE is one thing more than another that is clear and shining through this whole Constitution," declared Eamon De Valera in 1937, "it is the fact that the people are masters." Ireland's constitution embodies that sovereignty in a power of referendum which has been used to define the nature of modern Ireland on 18 occasions, most recently and narrowly in last week's vote that produced a 50.3 per cent majority in favour of abolishing the ban on divorce.

Narrow it may have been, but the rules are the rules, and the Irish government is now as fully entitled to press ahead with divorce legislation as if its plans had received overwhelming endorsement. The vote was no pyrrhic victory, because the majority for reform marks a clear shift in Irish opinion since the issue was last put to the people in 1986, when it was defeated by 63 to 37 per cent. The government can therefore be confident that the flow of opinion is in the direction of the more secular approach, which has been evident in Irish politics since at least the election of Mary Robinson as president of the Republic. The result is welcome in purely social policy terms, and genuinely shows that the Republic is much less clerically dominated than it once was.

However, it might be a mistake to imagine, as some do, that the result will make the Republic more attractive to Northern Irish opinion and thus ease the path of the stalled peace process at some later date. The reason for this caution is that the divorce referendum is only the latest of several attempts by well-meaning secular politicians in the south to alter the Irish constitution so as to make it less threatening to Unionists. None of these has had any significant effect, least of all the much more explicitly conciliatory 1972 vote to remove the special position of the Roman Catholic church in the Irish constitution, which was carried by an overwhelming 84 per cent. If that made little difference, then it is unlikely that this vote will do so either.

The one Irish referendum that may just make the north sit up and take notice is the one that has not taken place yet. This is the vote on the maintenance of Articles 2 and 3 of the Republic's constitution, which make an implicit territorial claim to the six counties of the north. Many Irish leaders have flirted with trying to repeal these clauses as part of the search for peace. This year's Anglo-Irish framework document again envisages such a vote eventually. But whether even this — assuming that it were carried — would persuade Unionist opinion in favour of the all-Ireland dimension must remain very much open to doubt. In the north, too, the people are masters.

# Incredible lightness of being John Major

**Hugo Young**

FOR FIVE years, John Major has been the perfect leader of the Tory party. Perfection in politics consists of maximising the available benefits, and he has done that. It also means doing what no one else could have done better, and he's done that as well. For more plainly than Margaret Thatcher in her first five years, he's been the leader to whom there was no possible alternative. He personified where the party's at. It could have asked for nothing more.

Arriving at the top in 1990, he carried no baggage. He was less defined by his past than any Tory leader had ever been. He didn't really have a past, despite doing the two jobs just below the top. He was a void, a medium, a vessel, for whatever the party wanted. That's why he was chosen, because he was an able, empty man who concealed behind diligence and decency a relentlessly focused ambition. No one else of his generation was so calculating, so pleasantly ruthless.

He did have opinions, as he does now. But they seldom involved awkward choices. He was for low tax and enterprise, but also for better services in Brixton. He was against racism, but never offended Tory racists. He was against inflation, an attitude he has succeeded in representing as some unique personal prerogative; and this helps account for the only thing he ever did that broke the mould of lowest common orthodoxy in which he has usually lived his politics — leading the case for British membership of the European exchange rate mechanism, which culminated in October 1990.

That has been a difficulty. It went terribly wrong two years later, and had a lasting effect on the way he's been seen, perhaps on the way he sees himself, ever since. But at the time, when he was Chancellor, it did not slow his ascent. He was backed for the leadership by all the people who opposed the ERM. This proved beyond doubt that he was, perversely, the unity candidate when Mrs Thatcher went.

Installed in Downing Street, he soon showed the mettle the party wanted. He took a series of problems and applied the political skills of the unencumbered pragmatist. The poll tax was disposed of, Europe apparently neutered, and a regime of fear and loathing replaced by Platonic dialogue round the cabinet table.

And the untried leader revealed special gifts. He took a fast brief, whether on the Gulf or Bosnia. He could soon mix it at the despatch box. He took on hard issues, notably the Ulster question. He worked day and night, joylessly but undistracted. He won an election by plausibly ranging his personal qualities against those of his main opponent.

All in all, he was the perfect man. The party did the right thing. But what is the party? That is the question. Is a party that could only be led by John Major a satisfactory agent of government? Does any man who can, in fact, lead it merit the name of hero, or congenital temporiser? The party, after all, made Major. Retaining its favour may not be a badge of honour so much as a blot on anyone's escutcheon.

The party became a disgrace to politics. Not six months after the country voted Major in, it was seething with people who wanted to pitch him out. The Furies visited on him more venomous contempt than any leader who has just won a decent majority has ever had to face. The party revelled in its divisions, intensified them, scorned and chastised the leader who failed, until last summer, to bury them. These are the forces Major is obliged to succour, or succumb to. The fact that anyone else would have succumbed long ago is a reflection of something more than his special brand of cussed resilience. The party wanted an empty man it could push around, and it found one.

He's done the job with energy and application. He's been good with people high and low. At calculating the negotiator's odds, there's nobody better, though he's taking Ireland close to the wire. But he's come, and will shortly go, as a directionless politician, because that's the only sort the party could tolerate. Being the perfect leader of an exhausted party, in permanent danger of falling apart, is a taxing but in the end unmemorable achievement, even though it may have lasted more than six years before it ends.

It's not Major's fault that his predicament, beginning with Europe but reaching deep into budgetary priorities as well, is entirely of the second type. The fault, instead, lies in objective circumstances. This is a party that has been in power far too long. By the natural rhythms of two-party politics, it should have lost the last election. The longer it stays, the more it disqualifies itself through the encroachment of presumptuous lassitude and suppressed internal rage. It goes through the motions of policy-making. The limousines keep rolling.

TO INTERVIEWERS, the leader keeps up the front of sanguine prophecy: which is not entirely a front, because, after all, he's already done five years' service and, at 25 points behind in public opinion polls, can afford to season the usual idiot confidence with that special calmness deriving from acquiescence, in the secret places of his mind, at the prospect of defeat. But at bottom, the party is in such bad shape that the leader's mere survival as leader looks like a triumph in itself.

There's no evidence that the public hates him. Although most voters wouldn't know it, and don't reckon it, he will probably bequeath his successor a better economic platform than any predecessor since Ted Heath has inherited. By comparison with Tony Blair, he scores badly on every count, but a kind of pity, unscarred by much malice, seems to be the dominant popular feeling. There's still some incredulity that the Brixton boy is there at all, which is tempered by the almost universal assumption that it won't be for much longer.

Five years does seem surprising, because Mr Major remains, whatever the year-count, a transitional figure. He leads a party that grievously outstayed its welcome. He has held the fort between one epoch when Conservatives knew who they were, and another when they will have the leisure to find out.

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# A world forced to keep bad company

Does big business have to behave unethically to make profits, asks **Martin Woollacott**

THE multinational corporation, today an even greater force in the world than it was 30 years ago when the first concerted criticism of corporate power emerged in western countries, is in moral crisis. The behaviour of Shell in Nigeria — right up to its announcement almost immediately after the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa that it is to go ahead with a new natural gas project there — is the case that proves the point.

Shell's failure to deal with the consequences of its decisions in Ogoniland is one example of a widespread abdication of responsibility by big corporations. Multinationals are insisting not only that they take an absolutely neutral line on the politics of the countries in which they invest and trade, but that they must "work with" local standards of ethics and morality. This opportunistic relativism is spreading rapidly.

Multinationals are moving swiftly into countries with oppressive governments, such as Burma. "Dollars matter more than democracy," one foreign businessman there said recently. Large American corporations were the principal forces which undercut President Clinton's efforts to link human rights in China with trade. It is possible today to see an economic equivalent of appeasement operating in the world, with the old industrialised, democratic world collaborating with bad regimes — not so much through formal political association as through the multinational corporations which link their economies.

Nor is the development that the multinationals are bringing about in the poorer half of the world necessarily the right kind of development. This may seem an unfair argument when you consider that investment by multinationals in the South has grown hugely since 1989 and that in roughly the same period this has created 12 million jobs, half of them in China. The problem with such statistics, however, is that they ignore the political conditions of investment and also the very high investment-to-jobs ratio involved. The hundreds of millions of people who need work in the poorer countries could not conceivably be accommodated with jobs paid for at this kind of price. What is wanted in such countries is job-rich ventures. The combinations of cheap skilled labour and relatively high technology that multinationals create may be welcome, but they cannot be an overall solution.

The worst suspicion is that corporations have gone beyond any supposed neutrality over political conditions to develop an attachment to a particular level of bad government; not so bad as to create chaotic conditions for business, but tough enough on its citizens to ensure a combination of public order, cheap labour, and low environmental and safety costs. The most notable feature of the world economy now is that comparative advantage rests more and more on social factors. The profits of corporations depend so much on exploiting the gradient between the wages, resource costs, and the environmental and safety conditions of different countries that they can be deemed to have an actual interest in the maintenance of certain kinds of authoritarian government.

This must not be so oppressive as to lead to social unrest or so lax and corrupt as to permit banditry, but above these low levels corporations may well find bad government not only acceptable but useful. As Susan George, a veteran critic of multinationals and the international financial institutions, says of corporations: "They need a minimum of order, policing and infrastructure, but after that they lose interest in the local politics."

Most corporations would now see the Nigerian government as falling below that line. It is too corrupt and too inefficient. In recent years, many big firms, including Unilever, whose business began in this part of Africa, have reduced their scale of operations there. Barclays Bank and Standard Chartered Bank, John Major's old employers, have done the same. Nigeria illustrates the differences between resource corporations, who must extract what they need where it is in the ground and cannot quarrel with geography, and the others, who can retreat from investments and markets if the situation becomes too difficult.

SHELL'S argument in Nigeria appears to have been that it operates there in joint venture with the government, and the government would not countenance the reduction in profits that would have followed from spending large sums of money on compensation and cleaning up pollution. Shell does not say, but it follows that the Nigerian government is by its character incapable of responding to social protest except by force and that if Shell had acted unilaterally, it would have been acting against the government.

Shell's difficulties can be imagined, and there is no reason not to accept that the corporation faces a very complex situation in Nigeria. Yet the apparent absence of moral calculation from its behaviour is striking, and the nine men who were executed are only the most obvious of those who have paid the price for that lack of morality.

At the root of corporate behaviour is a contradiction. Multinational firms have in recent years been able to operate much more freely than before, thanks to worldwide privatisation and deregulation, and to the changes that have taken us from Gatt to the World Trade Organisation. Structures of protection have been dismantled, and there is now hardly a country in the world in which multinationals cannot work, and very few in which there are any serious limitations on their activities. The corporations, which have largely got their way as world trade regulations have been reshaped and are subject to far fewer restrictions than ever before, ought to be happy companies of men.

But they are notoriously not happy organisations. Anthony Sampson, in his recent book, Company Man, has charted the troubles of the corporations as they have shed the certainties of the past, dismissed their middle-managers, dismantled their hierarchies, collapsed the company welfare states they used to run, and reacted with reorganisation after reorganisation to the push for short-term profits and the nostrums of consultants and of business snake oil merchants.

Looked at from the outside, multinational corporations seem very strong; but, looked at from the inside, it seems they feel very vulnerable indeed. If corporations are world managers today, they are not good ones — because they work on the basis of an almost complete separation of trade from politics.

In exchange for the unprecedented access they now enjoy to almost all national economies, there seems to be an unspoken agreement that corporations will take few ethical stands and generally resist any attempt to use trade sanctions to bring about political change. One side is free to trade as it sees fit, and the other to rule as it sees fit.

The result is that corporations see themselves as having few choices, as being victims of circumstance, and they tend to react to protest movements even in their home countries as just another of their problems. A recent article in a magazine much read by businessmen analyses Brent Spar as a "media mugging" and asks managers how they would cope with a Greenpeace assault.

MANAGERS are right to feel they are guardians of the productivity which keeps the world turning and that the way in which this productivity is achieved cannot be spotless in a difficult, dangerous and chaotic world. But there are surely degrees.

Theo Orlemans, Dutch head of the Nigerian natural gas company in which Shell has its stake, who announced in October that a new plant would go ahead, says: "I have not been able to see how stopping this project will help anybody, including the Ogoni people." In the narrowest sense he may be right. Yet a serious gesture by Shell would have hurt the Nigerian government in perhaps the only way it can be hurt and would have set an important precedent.

Individual businessmen share the same anxieties about the way that the world is going as do intelligent people of other backgrounds. Yet as a collective, they seem peculiarly resistant to the idea that morality and advantage might coincide in an effort to adopt common standards of production, safety and environmental care, and to avoid collusion with bad governments.

As Susan George says: "Why doesn't just one of them do it? And see if the consumers of the world would flock to its doors? I think they would. All the corporations think of is doing good public relations, and not of doing good, which might turn out to be the best public relations of all."

Target of hate . . . Nigerians demonstrate against Shell outside Downing Street PHOTOGRAPH: CLIVE GRYLLS



# Ethics and good business go hand in hand

**John Vidal**

THE trouble with Shell, says the Body Shop's Dr David Wheeler, is that it believes business can act in an ethical vacuum. He says Shell is unenlightened, philosophically passé and irresponsible; and the only positive outcome that will emerge from the Nigeria furore is a "softer, more holistic" Shell.

Body Shop has declared a moral war on Shell. Founder Anita Roddick says it will use all its resources in this, and promises to put pressure on Shell's shareholders and on pension funds to reform the oil multinational. Her staff must not use Shell products at work.

Dr Wheeler runs Body Shop's annual social and ethical audit of practices. He says successful 21st century companies will take account of all stakeholders — suppliers, customers and staff.

Dr Paul Minus, of Columbus, US, head of the Council for Ethics in Economics (an "industry apologist and a pragmatist"), says he's wrong: "Business cannot take an absolutist approach in these matters. People in developing countries are not prepared for full-blown western ethics." Minus believes some people are so poor that they might, for example, have to put up with air pollution because that's what comes with industry and development. When there is wealth, standards will rise.

"Respect for human dignity doesn't necessarily mean that Du Pont must do the same in New Jersey as in Tanzania." He adds there has been an ethics recession in society and industry's new role is to act as pedagogue and ethical mentor of workforces. He denies that these expressions conceal the truth — that people are approaching business with troublesome moral attitudes and that business will have to brainwash them.

But there is evidence that rightwingers in the US are trying to redefine business ethics to accord with strict monetarist theories. A former businessman and professor of marketing at Miami University, Lewis Pringle, says: "In many, if not all, emerging markets, it is simply impossible to make significant money without overt violation of normal western ethical principles."

Thad Jackson, "director of issue management" of the $42 billion a year Nestlé Corporation (accused of acting irresponsibly in developing countries) goes further: "There is a necessity to look at ethical issues outside of western philosophy in order to be effectively global."

The British public approves the Body Shop line and wants industry at least to try to be ethical. A poll recently done for the think-tank Demos found only 15 per cent of people thought multinationals were trustworthy; two-thirds thought they did not strike a fair balance between profits and public interest. Demos drew on US studies to find that poor ethics hit profits hard. Reformers like Body Shop say good ethics pay handsomely in the long run.

So the battle is on for the moral high ground, says Professor Homer Erikson, who holds the chair of economics at Miami. "A moral vacuum is appearing as governments everywhere cede authority to business. The role of government is declining, as is the old seventies and eighties agenda of rampant self-interest. The public is pressuring business everywhere to act more responsibly."

# Savoy's unwelcome guest

Granada's bid for the Forte Group, which includes some of London's top hotels, is rooted in a long feud between a snobbish City establishment and an Italian clan. **Patrick Donovan**, **Ian King** and **Tony May** report

IT TELLS you much about Sir Rocco Forte that Britain's best known hotelier had gone pheasant shooting when news broke that his Forte Group faced a £3.3 billion hostile bid.

Even his closest lieutenants had no inkling of the audacious takeover bid for his family-controlled hotels-to-restaurant chain which was in the final stages of being put together after an all-night meeting of City bankers. And then, dramatically, the Granada television group broke cover at 7.30am on Wednesday of last week, duly announcing that it was bidding for the entire Forte Group.

And in so doing Granada has raised the curtain on what promises to be one of the most dramatic battles in the history of the City of London. For this is a story of over-sized personalities, huge egos and glittering wealth. And at the centre of the plot is the tale of the Fortes' obsession with the world's most glamorous hotel chain.

The Forte Group's assets range from humble Happy Eaters to more exotic hostelries, such as the Moscow Golf and Country Club and an Irish pub in Abu Dhabi. But for the Forte clan it is their share in the Savoy Group which is the most prized asset, including glamorous names such as the Savoy itself, Claridge's, The Connaught, and the Charles V in Paris.

Although the Forte clan now owns just 8 per cent of its shares, the business is above all a family firm, started by Rocco's father, Charles Forte, more than 60 years ago. An Italian immigrant, Forte started his first milk bar with £2,000 of borrowed capital. Rapidly diversifying into hotels and restaurants, the Forte Group (or Trusthouse Forte as it was known) prospered.

On the other side of the trenches is another business dynasty, the Granada Group, which was founded by the grandfather of its current chairman, Alex Bernstein. Having worked his way up through the business for 36 years, Bernstein is now on the brink of retirement.

His heir-designate is 47-year-old Gerry Robinson, a hard-nosed executive who took over four years ago and has ruthlessly turned the company around. In the process he has carved out a reputation as a corporate axeman — a track record which will not be lost on Forte's workforce as they contemplate the implications of a Granada takeover.


Gerry Robinson: accused Forte of regarding the Savoy hotels as 'trophy assets'

The decision to launch the takeover offer is an effective vote of no-confidence in the way that Forte has been running the company since taking over the reins from his father. And in particular, Robinson has cast doubts on the wisdom of Forte's quest to take control of the Savoy Group — a strategy that has been a near obsession for the family for the past 10 years.

While pursuing this goal, Granada claims the Fortes have let management controls of its main business slip. Robinson last week said that Forte had allowed the company to deteriorate into a mish-mash of different brands with no overriding management control.

But the most damaging phrase Robinson used in demolishing the Forte's business strategy was to deride its most precious assets as "trophy hotels". In City parlance, this is virtually accusing Forte of a single-minded strategy owing far more to personal vanity than to hard-headed business realities. Those who know Forte well accept that this is in some ways fair criticism. As one observer who has worked with son and father pointed out: "This is a classic case of an immigrant family trying to be accepted by the British establishment."

Even though Rocco Forte was educated at public school (Downside) before reading modern languages at Pembroke College, Oxford, he has long been been regarded as an *arriviste* by the City Old Guard. This came to a head when the Fortes launched their unsuccessful bid for the Savoy Group more than 14 years ago. The result was to put the family at loggerheads with some of the biggest names in the British establishment which are so widely represented on the Savoy board.

The battle for control rapidly deteriorated into a personal slanging match. The late Sir Hugh Wontner, for example, who was a former Lord Mayor of London and presided over the Savoy Group until his death in 1993, made no secret of his contempt for his Forte rivals: "Italians make good hotel managers", he once said. Another famous put-down was: "I've known little Forte since he ran his milk bar."

It was this vendetta between the Fortes and the City establishment which sowed the seeds for Granada takeover bid. For the accusation confronting the company is that Forte failed to concentrate on developing the bulk of his business while wrangling to takeover the Savoy Group. He holds more than 60 per cent of the shares but, crucially, less than half the voting rights, because of the arcane way in which the share structure is controlled.

FORTE moved a step nearer his goal of taking over the Savoy last year when he was at last awarded a role in managing the hotels through a special "management committee". He joined luminaries like Sir Ewen Fergusson, the former British ambassador to France, and wealthy City figures. It seemed as if the establishment was at last accepting the Fortes as one of their own.

Forte may have won the battle, but last week it was looking like a pyrrhic victory as Granada cast scorn on the Savoy's profit record and its contribution to the parent Forte Group's bottom line. With nightly rates of more than £200 a room, the Savoy turned in last recorded profits of just £3.74 million on turnover of £45.7 million. The profit margins are smaller than virtually any other hotel group in the world because of the Savoy's commitment to quality regardless of cost.

Small surprise that a hard-nosed manager like Robinson is criticising the Savoy hotels as "trophy assets". Yet the Forte Group would be in a stronger position to shrug off the attack if its own business had been putting up a better performance.

Robinson has claimed that Forte shares have languished in the stock market. Forte operating profits over the past five years have fallen by 11 per cent, with its dividend payments to shareholders falling by as much as 24 per cent.

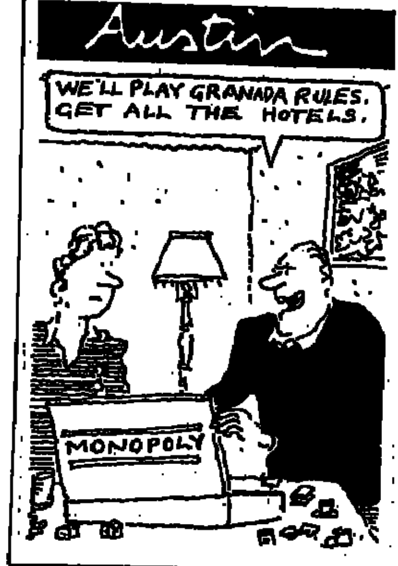
If Granada takes over Forte, he promised that the company would sell off most of its luxury hotels and part of its motorway service station catering arm, and concentrate on building up the rest of the business. In the process, the group would help pay for its enormous multi-billion pound bid by raising around £500 million through the sale of "fringe businesses".

At the weekend, as the Forte camp prepared its vital defence document — said to include a plan to purge the board of "old guard" directors and promote younger managers, plus the long-awaited sale of the 70-strong White Hart hotels chain for £100 million to a venture consortium — Rocco Forte opened a second front. He attacked Robinson and questioned his judgment in making the bid, saying: "He must be mad."

Apart from the selling of the Savoy stake and the so-called trophy hotels, he said there was nothing new in Granada's proposals except "the potty plan to charge customers more".

Battle has commenced between two of Britain's biggest business dynasties. It is a fight which will decide the future of some of the world's most famous hotels. As shares soared in hectic trading last week, it was clear that the hotels group faces an enormous task in fighting off the unwelcome bidder.

As he sped back to London last week, Rocco Forte must have been reflecting that he had chosen a bad day for pheasant shooting.




## In Brief

TRADE with non-EU countries, which makes up nearly half of all UK trade, hit a record low of £1.2 billion in October. The value of exports fell 7 per cent to £5.3 billion and imports rose 1.5 per cent to an all-time high of £6.5 billion, according to the Central Statistical Office.

THE GOVERNMENT raised doubts over the nuclear power industry sell-off when it referred bids for two regional electricity companies to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. National Power has offered £2.8 billion for Southern Electric, and PowerGen £1.9 billion for Midlands.

NICK LEESON, the disgraced Barings trader extradited from Germany, was remanded in custody for a week by a judge in Singapore and formally charged with fraud and forgery.

FORMER Guinness chairman Ernest Saunders and his three co-defendants lost their second appeal against convictions for illegal share dealing. Mr Saunders will ask to take the case to the House of Lords.

BRITISH Telecom chairman Sir Iain Vallance is stepping down as chief executive, to be replaced by Peter Bonfield, head of the computer group ICL. Sir Iain remains as full-time chairman.

REED Elsevier has sold its 129-strong stable of regional newspapers in Britain to a management buy-out backed by Wall Street finance house Kohlberg Kravis Roberts for £205 million.

THE former Governor of the Bank of England, Lord O'Brien, has died aged 87. As head of the bank from 1966-73, he was highly successful in reinstating credit control and sound monetary policy after sterling's devaluation in 1967.

TOTAL losses at Lloyd's of London for the horror years 1986-92 will reach £11.4 billion — nearly 30 per cent higher than previously estimated.

## FOREIGN EXCHANGES

| | Sterling rates November 20 | Sterling rates November 27 |
|---|---|---|
| Australia | 2.0850-2.0893 | 2.0937-2.0980 |
| Austria | 15.35-15.38 | 15.65-15.68 |
| Belgium | 44.89-44.99 | 45.71-45.85 |
| Canada | 2.0923-2.0953 | 2.0952-2.0982 |
| Denmark | 8.52-8.54 | 8.60-8.62 |
| France | 7.59-7.61 | 7.63-7.65 |
| Germany | 2.1853-2.1883 | 2.2257-2.2288 |
| Hong Kong | 11.97-11.98 | 11.98-11.99 |
| Ireland | 0.9677-0.9702 | 0.9669-0.9694 |
| Italy | 2,469-2,473 | 2,471-2,476 |
| Japan | 157.01-157.27 | 157.67-157.94 |
| Netherlands | 2.4464-2.4497 | 2.4924-2.4956 |
| New Zealand | 2.3755-2.3790 | 2.3822-2.3853 |
| Norway | 9.63-9.65 | 9.79-9.81 |
| Portugal | 228.78-229.40 | 231.97-232.59 |
| Spain | 187.96-188.25 | 189.22-189.51 |
| Sweden | 10.16-10.19 | 10.13-10.15 |
| Switzerland | 1.7629-1.7657 | 1.7959-1.7987 |
| USA | 1.5492-1.5502 | 1.5504-1.5514 |
| ECU | 1.1907-1.1921 | 1.2016-1.2032 |

FTSE100 Share Index up 20.2 at 3649.0. FTSE 250 Index down 22.5 at 3944.3. Gold down $1.75 at $384.75



The Washington Post



# Uncertainties Cloud Haiti's Democracy

**Douglas Farah**
**in Port-au-Prince**

HAITI'S transformation into a full-fledged democracy with prospects for economic renewal, which seemed firmly on track just a few months ago, suddenly looks much less certain.

Many of the country's traditional elite, who have distrusted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide since he rose to prominence as a Roman Catholic priest preaching class warfare and liberation theology, are slipping out of the country. International aid, promised in exchange for unpopular economic reforms and privatization, is being withheld as the reforms falter, and foreign investors are backing off in the face of growing uncertainty.

Last week, Aristide said publicly he would consider staying past his constitutional mandate of February 7, as supporters urged him to cancel presidential elections scheduled for December 17.

"The whole atmosphere here has changed so quickly and dramatically," said one conservative Haitian businessman who supported Aristide's return. "I left at the end of October, and things were moving along and elections were scheduled. I came back 10 days later, and I found tension, real fear and unease. No one knows what is going to happen anymore."

Since President Clinton took the gamble of sending 20,000 U.S. troops to occupy Haiti and restore Aristide to power 14 months ago, things had gone well. No American troops were killed in action, and Aristide preached peace and reconciliation in the deeply polarized and impoverished nation.

But there were stark divisions between the fiery Aristide, supported by the impoverished Haitian majority, and the nation's tiny political and economic elite, who had supported decades of dictatorship under the Duvalier family and their successors. In recent weeks, old misgivings and distrust have surfaced on both sides — along with new tensions between Aristide's administration and the United States.

"To say the relationship is ruptured is too strong," said a senior U.S. official in Washington. "I think edgy is a good word."


Demonstrators march through Port-au-Prince during a recent protest against the privatization of Haiti's state run enterprises and the continued presence of U.N. troops PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN McCONNICO

U.S. Embassy spokesman Stan Schrager said the U.S. position was that "we are still on track. The train may be a little wobbly, but we're still on track."

Relations took a sharp dip in October, when Prime Minister Smarck Michel, widely respected in the United States and internationally for carrying out a program of privatization, resigned when the president refused to back the program publicly.

With no progress being made on privatization of nine state companies, the United States announced it was withholding $4.6 million in aid, and another $110 million is jeopardized. This accounts for about 35 percent of the nation's budget.

"We are disappointed Haiti has not moved more assertively on economic reforms," Schrager said. "There has been some progress and the economy has improved marginally, but not enough to attract the private sector interest or foreign investment that is needed."

The strained political climate worsened dramatically with the assassination on November 7 of newly elected legislator Jean-Hubert Feuille, a cousin of Aristide who was also the president's close friend and bodyguard. Another legislator, Gabriel Fortune, was badly wounded in the incident. The shootings, by a well-armed team of gunmen, sparked angry street protests around the country.

On November 11, Aristide, in a speech at Feuille's funeral, lashed out at the international community for not taking a more aggressive role in disarming the remnants of the Haitian military and its paramilitary allies.

In the emotional speech that left the diplomatic corps badly shaken but many Haitians cheering wildly, Aristide called on the people to help the police carry out a "legal, total and complete disarmament operation . . . If those who have weapons, those who have the big armored tanks, those who have much power, wanted to help us disarm the thugs, disarmament would have been done."

In a swipe at U.S. and U.N. officials, Aristide told the crowd that "until further notice, there are not two or three heads of state, but just one. The head of state has spoken."

"I ask the Haitian people for the following: Do not sit idly by, do not wait; accompany the policemen when they are going to enter the homes of the people who have heavy weapons," Aristide said in the speech, which was broadcast nationally numerous times. "When you do that, tell the policemen not to go only to the poor neighborhoods, but to go to the neighborhoods where there are big houses and heavy weapons."

Aristide also acknowledged he needed international aid, while the Clinton administration needed a diplomatic success in Haiti.

Immediately after the speech, crowds of people in the capital set up roadblocks, and stopped and searched vehicles. Dozens of houses of supporters of the military coup were looted, and at least 11 people were killed in incidents of violence. Aristide almost immediately asked people to return to calm.

Aristide advisers said that the president was reacting emotionally to the murder of a close friend, and that Haitian and foreign intelligence operations had detected plots by the far right to assassinate some of Aristide's followers.

In a secret State Department cable dated October 26, obtained by The Washington Post, Secretary of State Warren Christopher warned U.S. Ambassador William Swing there were intelligence reports that the Red Star Organization, under the guidance of former military dictator Prosper Avril, "is planning harassment and assassination campaign directed at the Lavalas party (Aristide's political force) and Aristide supporters. The campaign is scheduled to commence in early December 1995. Although the information relating to assassination planning has not been corroborated, there is information available which suggests Avril has continued to meet with right-wing supporters to expand his political base."

Police raided Avril's house, arrested some of his relatives and confiscated a cache of arms right after the speech. Avril was not home, and fled to the Colombian Embassy, where he was granted political asylum.

"You can criticize the president's speech, but it was a wake-up call to people, saying he was not going to take any more," said an Aristide adviser.

Then Aristide said he would consider staying in office three more years, to make up for the three years he spent in exile. The statement caught even advisers by surprise, because Aristide had maintained publicly and privately that he would hold elections as scheduled and leave office on February 7.

● With political violence reappearing in Haiti as a presidential election approaches, the Clinton administration and several allied nations have begun planning for an extended international military and police presence after U.N. troops leave in February.

While administration officials emphasize the U.N. mission will end as promised in three months, they see Haiti's nascent police force as too inexperienced to keep the peace alone.

The arrangement probably will include keeping teams of U.S. military engineers in the country. Additionally, the United States will offer follow-on training to Haiti's police force under a five-year contract, and France and Canada have agreed to provide law enforcement officers for a residual international constabulary force, officials said.

# Can Blood Be Allowed to Boost Ratings?

OPINION
**George F. Will**

HERE are some sounds of entertainment in a nation entertaining itself into barbarism: "I was hitting him to the brain stem, which is a killing blow, and when he covered up I'd swing back with upswings to the eye sockets with two knuckles and a thumb. There was no other place on his body you could hurt him."

"There's the toe stomp!" "There's an open thigh there — he should do some punching." "His tooth went flying out of the ring!" "He's going to snap his arm — he did, too!"

Those are words from a participant and some announcers involved in "ultimate fighting" or "extreme fighting," which involves two combatants in an octagonal pen, governed by minimal rules: no biting or eye gouging. There are no rounds, no judges, no weight classifications. The combatants fight until one is unconscious, disabled or "taps out" — taps the canvas, signalling surrender. The referee's job is to watch for the tapping, occasionally summon a doctor to see if a participant can continue, and exhort the combatants to pour it on.

Six states have permitted such a spectacle. One permissive state is enough to make this a flourishing amusement on pay-per-view television. Three months ago about 300,000 subscribers paid $20 each to see the seventh Ultimate Fighting Championship.

More are coming, but if you can't wait, your neighborhood Blockbuster, which will not rent sexual pornography, probably offers cassettes of some UFC events like the one in which a man's face was pounded to a pulp while he crawled across the canvas, leaving a broad smear of blood. Especially memorable is slow-motion footage from an overhead camera showing a man pounding the face of a pinned opponent. Aficionados savor full-force kicks to faces and elbows smashed into temples.

Participants in these events are frightening, but less so than the paying customers. They include slack-jawed children whose parents must be cretins, and raving adults whose ferocity away from the arena probably does not rise above muttering epithets at meter maids.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., a former Naval aviator who was a boxer at Annapolis and spent more than five years being tortured as a prisoner by the North Vietnamese, is exhorting governors and local officials to ban "extreme fighting" events because they pose "an unacceptable risk to the lives and health of the contestants."

To the objection that the contestants are consenting adults, McCain, arguing within the severe limits imposed by our society's respect for choice, says perhaps a contestant is "driven by profits or the enticements of publicity associated with it and unknowingly is placing his or her life at risk."

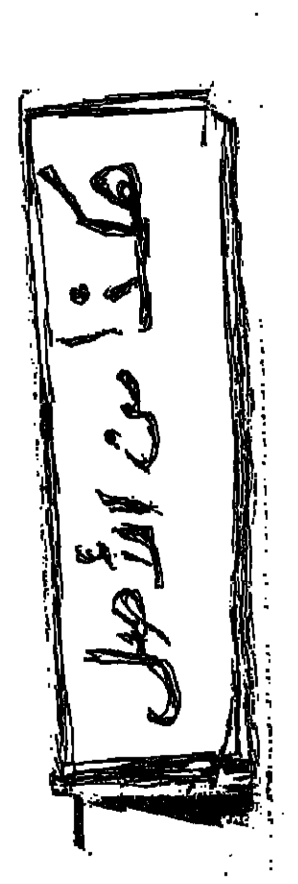
To which libertarians respond: If you ban being driven by profits and enticed by publicity, what remains of modern life?

Although in one letter to a governor McCain says he is "solely" concerned with damage done to combatants, he also worries about the "glorification of cruelty."

"Extreme fighting" forces a commercial society to decide when the morals of the marketplace are insufficient: Do we really ban cockfighting only because the birds cannot consent? Suppose someone offers a $10 million prize for a Russian roulette competition — winner take all, necessarily. Imagine the pay-per-view potential.

Would — should — we so respect "consumer sovereignty" that we would allow that? The question is hypothetical, but perhaps not for long. In entertainment, competition does not elevate. Competition for audiences in an increasingly jaded, coarsened and desensitized society causes competitors to devise ever more lurid vulgarities to titillate the sated. If you think "extreme fighting" is as extreme as things can get, just wait.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
December 3 1995



# Peres Seeks Early Peace With Syria

**Barton Gellman in Jerusalem**

SHIMON PERES was sworn in as Israel's 12th prime minister last week, forming the same slim parliamentary majority as his slain predecessor and pledging to press for an early peace accord with Syria even if it hurts his chance of reelection.

He told parliament that he will not permit a "murderer's bullets" to "destroy the democratic process or the peace process." But he also signaled a divide-and-conquer approach to his political opponents, reaching out to moderate Jewish settlers and Orthodox Jews in ways that the governing Labor Party coalition has seldom done of late.

In an interview immediately after his swearing in, Peres said he will try to complete a deal with Syria before next year's general election. Swing voters in public opinion polls say consistently, at least in the abstract, that they do not want a treaty with Syria if it means returning all or most of the Golan Heights, Syria's principal demand.

"I said, and I was serious, that for me to win peace is more important than to win elections," he said, sipping mint tea in an office whose door still bears the placard: "Yitzhak Rabin, Prime Minister of the State of Israel."

The 72-year-old Peres, who admitted to "some long days and short nights" since Rabin's November 4 assassination, looked baggy under the eyes and slumped a bit in his chair. But he spoke with confidence and energy of his strategy for the coming year, unfolding the diplomatic milestones month by month.

Between now and Christmas, Peres said, Israel will complete its withdrawal from all major West Bank cities except parts of Hebron. He said he hopes the Palestinians will stick to plans to hold their first democratic elections on January 20. Within two months of those elections, they must remove references to Israel's destruction from the Palestinian Covenant — or, he said, "we shall not move" further toward self-rule.

In May, the two sides are scheduled to begin talks on the difficult issues they have saved for last — such as the future status of Jerusalem, final borders and the return of Palestinian refugees — and Peres said he sees no reason to start sooner. August will bring another scheduled round of army withdrawals from less populous parts of the West Bank, and Israel's parliamentary election will come on October 29.

All the while, he said, he will be making overtures to Syria, looking for "the opportunity to play on the piano full scale."

"Once we have peace with Egypt, once we have peace with Jordan, once we have tried to solve the Palestinian problem, the remaining issue is Syria and Lebanon," he said. "For us it is an essential problem. This will not just be the last negotiation, but the end of the wars in the Middle East."

In one of the most vivid moments of his speech to parliament, which Peres said he had written himself, he addressed Damascus: "I wish to say to the Syrian president, Hafez Assad, that the logic of war between us has ended. The differences of opinion which remain can be resolved in negotiations based on mutual respect."

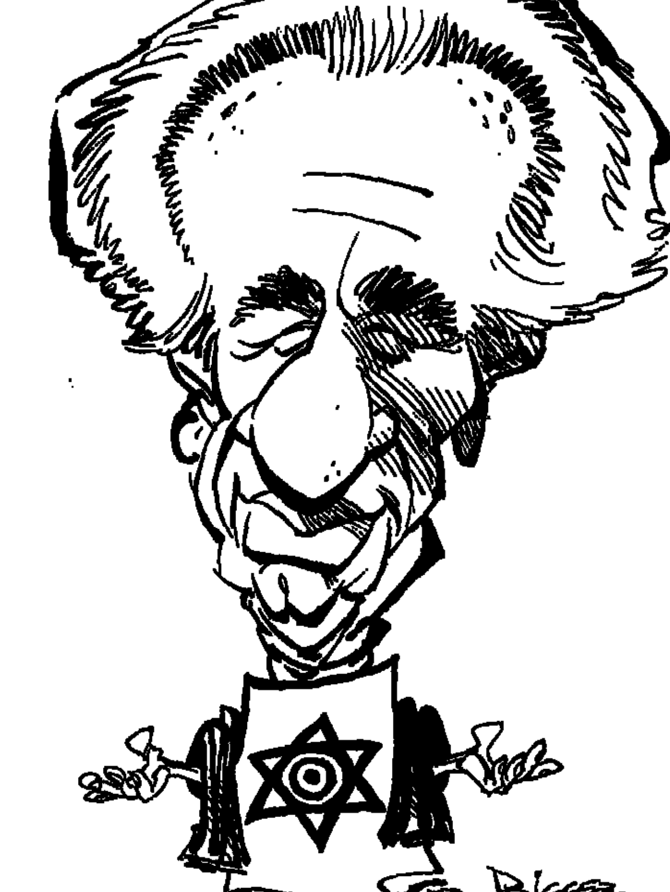
Peres addressed himself with equal energy to the divisions in Israeli society and politics after Rabin's murder by a member of the extreme religious right. He carefully avoided the word "settlers," which has taken on a polarizing cast in contemporary Israel, but said he had "no intention of ignoring the distress of the residents of the territories." He pledged to work with them to resolve their "real problems."

THE CABINET that Peres formed was equally calculated to reassure. He kept the defense portfolio himself, as Rabin had, to exercise direct control of what he called "the no man's land between security and peace." But he appointed retired Lt. Gen. Ehud Barak, the decorated former chief of the general staff, as foreign minister.

In a gesture to religious Jews, Peres recruited Rabbi Yehuda Amital, who heads an Orthodox if politically centrist yeshiva, to be minister without portfolio.

Peres paused to remind his listeners that Israel's economy is booming and Israelis can now aspire one day to reach a standard of living "comparable to that of the United States and Europe."

In his interview Peres described a political strategy that differs somewhat from the one pursued by his slain rival for Labor Party leadership. He said he did not want to fight "two conflicts" at once, against "the religious on religious grounds and the right on political grounds."



Peres implied he was willing to make concessions on religion — he did not specify what — to leave him free to fight the hard core of political opposition to his strategy of exchanging captured land for peace with Palestinians and Syria.

Peres won last week's vote 62 to 8, with 38 legislators abstaining. His center-left coalition formally includes only 58 of the parliament's 120 seats, but he will normally be able to count on the five votes of the two small Arab-dominated parties. The talks with the Orthodox parties are aimed at providing him insurance on close votes in which right-leaning Labor Party legislators may defect.

Opposition leader Binyamin Netanyahu led his Likud Party in abstaining in the vote to demonstrate, he said, that "political murder cannot be allowed to change the government." He added, however, that "we don't have confidence in this new [Labor Party] path, just as we didn't have confidence in the old path."

Peres told the parliament he would honor Rabin's legacy, but added pointedly that "there will be changes brought about by time or events."

Peres, who served as prime minister once before in a "national unity government" from 1984 to 1986, is more flexible than Rabin was on procedural details of the Syria talks, and he is widely thought to be more willing to make substantive concessions as well.

In the interview he declined, however, to discuss the extent of his willingness to return the Golan Heights, which Israel captured from Syria in the 1967 Middle East War. Syria, he said, continues to repeat only its maximum demands and he added that "you cannot have that Israel will offer her fallback position and Syria will offer her opening position."

Pressed on whether he can bring his public along, whatever the final deal may be, Peres complained that "public life was corrupted because people thought the greatest thing in politics is image and perception."

"A leader must be like a bus driver," he said. "Namely, he cannot turn his head all the time backward to see how the passengers feel. He'll make them nervous. You want him to sit at the wheel, watch the road and keep the wheel. We are not in the business of pleasure. We are in the business of leading."

# Bosnia Deal Deserves A Chance

EDITORIAL

THE Bosnia peace agreement makes what it can of the debris of 43 months of war. Some wretched part of it condones "ethnic cleansing" and the alteration of borders by force. But a saving part holds the prospects of ending the slaughter and enabling the parties to start dampening what must be deeply felt impulses of hurt and revenge.

Bosnia's prime minister calls the accord a peace that is "perhaps not just, but more just than the continuation of war." It reflects the weariness of the parties. Croatia, promised back all its lost territory, was finally ready for a deal. Serbia, aching under sanctions, undertook to bring its Bosnian Serb clients into a settlement.

The terms in this ambitious and complex agreement slip past basic differences. A single, multi-ethnic state with a united capital is proclaimed but not given the requisite central powers. This gives the agreement a flavor of artificiality.

Yet it could hardly have been otherwise. To take creation of a single state fully seriously could easily rekindle the war. As it is, a hardening of ethnic partition may yet come.

President Clinton, roused by the Serbs' mass murders at Srebrenica, mobilized American force through NATO. He assigned Richard Holbrooke and Warren Christopher to the job.

Thus did the administration invest its own and the country's prestige in a project that, to have a fair chance of consummation, needs Republican congressional approval to tuck American troops into a NATO force separating the parties in Bosnia.

To get over the hurdles of skepticism and partisanship, Clinton needs to show he is acting with strategic purpose as well as tactical shrewdness. He must demonstrate that the agreement, for all its frailties, serves the parties and therefore will be substantially respected by them. Further, he must convey that a default would be a stunning blow to post-Cold War American claims of global leadership, and a virtual invitation to disorder elsewhere.

# Canadian Trappers Win Year's Reprieve

**Charles Trueheart in Toronto**

WITH A looming European ban on pelts from animals caught in leg-hold traps, Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien took German Chancellor Helmut Kohl to remote Baffin Island in the Arctic last June to showcase Canada's historic belief in responsible fur-trapping.

In the coastal village of Pangnirtung, Northwest Territories, cameras recorded the two leaders meeting the Inuit who, along with other native people, comprise half the Canadians engaged in trapping — and the population with the most to lose if the European Union were to slam the door on what they have harvested for millennia. Europe imports three-quarters of Canada's wild fur.

Kohl pledged "to talk about it again in the European community. I see these people are very concerned about their nature and environment."

North American pressure has not abated since, and last week the European Union moved to delay again implementation of a ban on the import of pelts from 13 kinds of animals trapped in devices sometimes called leg-hold traps. These include beaver, mink, muskrat, fox, and coyote. The ban can be read to exclude such wild fur pelts from the European market even if they have not been trapped with a leg-hold device.

Canada and the United States, which have formed a common front against the European ban, would have faced its implementation as of January 1. Now they have another year to press their case with the EU and member countries.

No country has invested more in resisting encroachments on its fur trade than Canada, where the first Europeans traversed the land four centuries ago and traded with the natives and built a country on the beaver pelt.

Today some 80,000 Canadians are engaged in trapping fur-bearing creatures, a far larger percentage in this nation of 30 million than in the United States. It is seasonal work, and many who practice it live close to the margin and the welfare rolls. Most of the fur is used in garments and fashion accessories for a high-end, largely female clientele.

Canada knows first hand the sting of trade bans instigated by animal-rights activists. Its North Atlantic sealing industry, another livelihood that affects many native peoples, was devastated by the 1983 European ban on imports of seal pup pelts.

European relations are a tense subject here. Just this year, another of Canada's endangered employment sectors, the Newfoundland fishing industry, was in a protracted dustup with the European Union concerning overfishing in the North Atlantic. Since the fishing dispute was settled provisionally, according to a diplomat in Ottawa, the leg-hold trap issue has become "the top irritant in the relationship" between Canada and the EU.

The fur trade may not rank high in trade dollars — European imports of Canadian fur and fur products exceed $30 million per year — but "as a public issue that involves native people, the environment, humane practices, it's right up there," the diplomat said.

The delay will give another year's lease to a working group on international trapping standards composed of representatives from Canada, the United States, Russia and the EU. If the group can develop acceptable standards, the ban may become moot. But the European Parliament and the constituent governments remain under strong pressure from European animal rights groups.



GUARDIAN WEEKLY
December 3 1995



# Ukraine Battles for Faithful

Church leaders have entered the debate over the country's relationship with Russia, writes **James Rupert** in Kiev

ON HILLTOPS overlooking the Dnieper River, the green and gold onion domes of Kiev's ancient Orthodox sanctuaries and monasteries still dominate this city's skyline. Beneath them, these days, Russian and Ukrainian clerics are fighting an ecclesiastical war over who will lead Ukraine's millions of Orthodox believers.

The Russian Orthodox Church and two Ukrainian nationalist churches are contesting an age-old question: whether Ukraine is a distinct nation or part of Russia. Politically, the matter was resolved with Ukraine's independence after the Soviet Union's collapse. But in Orthodox religious terms, Ukraine's independence is still at issue.

The conflict also is a power struggle over one of Ukraine's most influential and wealthy institutions. Bishops and priests have switched allegiance from one church to another and back again, sometimes in hopes of advancing their careers, according to church sources and Ukrainian journalists. Supporters of rival churches have fought street battles over church property.

If the Russian Orthodox Church loses Ukraine, it would lose much of its leading role in the global Orthodox community. With Ukraine, the Russian church represents about half of the world's 170 million or more Eastern Orthodox believers, dwarfing the other 17 official Orthodox churches. But Ukraine long has formed half or more of the Russian church's strength in members, priests and resources, religious scholars say.

"The Russian Orthodox Church is the last residue of the unity . . . of old imperial Russia," said Vasyl Markus, a professor at Chicago's Loyola University and specialist on religion in the former Soviet Union. "It includes an old, patriotic Russian elite that would like to keep . . . influence in Ukraine" and other former Russian-ruled lands, he said.

Since 1992, two independent Ukrainian churches have challenged Russian authority, winning priests and members. And even the Russian church's appointed leader in Ukraine has said the country needs an independent church. Nationalism is such a powerful idea here that some political and religious analysts say the Russian church is bound ultimately to lose control.

But the Russian church has a powerful advantage — the deeply rooted traditionalism of Orthodoxy. Orthodox canon requires that any new independent church be sanctioned by the ecumenical patriarch, based in Istanbul. Perhaps partly because of the Russian church's influence, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has so far rebuffed appeals by Ukrainian churches for recognition, leaving them isolated from the Orthodox community.

Russian church officials say many parishes in eastern Ukraine, which has a higher percentage of ethnic Russians, want to remain under Moscow. "Many people see independence as a step away from Russian identity and toward the West," said the Rev. Vitaliy Kosovskiy, secretary of the Russian church's office. "They even fear that the next step would be to pull them into the Roman Catholic Church."

For centuries, Ukraine's prosperous economy and strong religious tradition made it a pillar of the Russian church. This was accentuated under Soviet oppression. Following World War II, "two-thirds of all the open churches in the Soviet Union were located in . . . Ukraine, while perhaps as many as 70 percent of the students in the seminaries were Ukrainians," according to a history of Orthodoxy by Timothy Ware, a British Orthodox priest and scholar.

The Russian church's dependence on Ukraine has lessened since Soviet days. Kosovskiy said the Ukrainian branch is now financially detached from the Russian "mother church."

The fight for Ukrainian Orthodoxy poses complications not only for Russia's church but also for the remarkably moderate political evolution in Ukraine.

In four years of independence, Ukraine has confounded predictions of many Western analysts that it would quickly ignite in conflict between ethnic Russian and Ukrainian extremists. Extreme nationalists have been confined to the margins of politics. But it has been the church conflict that has done most to pull them toward the center — especially in the battles over properties.

The most bizarre fight involved the Ukrainian Orthodox Church that split from the Russian church in 1992 under the leadership of Kiev's longtime Orthodox primate, then Metropolitan Filaret. Filaret's church, like its two rivals, has campaigned strenuously for control of Kiev's most venerated shrine, the 11th-century St. Sophia's Cathedral.

In July, after the patriarch of Filaret's church died, the church tried to buttress its claims to the cathedral by burying him on its grounds. But under President Leonid Kuchma, the state refused to permit the burial.

After a church funeral, paramilitary fighters of an extreme right-wing group, the Ukrainian People's Self-Defense, marched the coffin to a police barricade. With Filaret and priests in tow, the group shoved police aside, marched to a gate of St. Sophia's and buried the patriarch in a sidewalk outside.

Filaret's acceptance of support from the Ukrainian People's Self-Defense has given the group its most prominent political role in Ukraine and raised unwelcome distractions for the Kuchma government.



Ukraine, a pillar of the Russian church for centuries, is beginning to challenge traditional orthodoxy PHOTOGRAPH VALERY ZUFAROV

Filaret won election last month as patriarch of his church, prompting several of its bishops in western Ukraine to announce they would switch their allegiance to the rival Ukrainian Autocephalous (or independent) Orthodox Church.

Relations between the two nationalist churches "are very antagonistic," said Oleh Kalynychenko, an administrative officer of the autocephalous church. Last month, its leaders and the defecting bishops from Filaret's camp announced a new effort to form a united Ukrainian church. They said they would work with the Moscow-appointed primate in Kiev, Metropolitan Volodymyr.

Volodymyr took office in 1992 saying Ukraine must remain part of the Russian church. He has since declared that Ukraine should become independent, but that it cannot do so outside church law or, especially, behind Filaret.

# Albania Dreams With the Pentagon

**John Pomfret and David B. Ottaway**

LOOKING STATELY in a sharp new uniform, Maj. Gen. Perlat Sula stood on a bluff overlooking the deep blue waters off Albania's Adriatic coast. The Albanian air force commander wore a pensive look: Dancing through his head, he said, were visions of U.S. Marines landing in the soft surf, U.S. Army helicopters flitting along the shoreline and U.S. Navy warplanes shrieking overhead.

Under Albanian communism, Sula would have been having a nightmare. "Today," he said, "it is a very good dream."

Only three years after Albania shed a virulent form of totalitarianism that won it the sobriquet "the North Korea of Europe," its military has run headlong into the embrace of the U.S. Defense Department. The result — a partnership between the richest army in the world and one of the poorest — has spawned what one West European diplomat called "perhaps the weirdest military relationship I've ever seen."

Albania was the first nation in the former Eastern Bloc to formally request entry into NATO and the 10th to sign up for NATO's Partnership for Peace.

It is scheduled to become the first state in the former Eastern Bloc to buy weapons from the United States. The Pentagon has earmarked $2 million in its 1996 budget to help Albania purchase two TOW anti-tank systems and five Vulcan anti-aircraft weapons. U.S. military aid to Albania has run the gamut from more than 150 used vehicles to a 500-bed field hospital and a shipment of army underwear. Plans next year are for several T-37 jet trainers and two patrol boats to be thrown in free.

A team of U.S. military surveyors is scheduled to arrive in Albania shortly to scout for a training center for Albanians and U.S. sailors and Marines — including the center Perlat visited recently on the seashore at Rreth Garth, 35 miles southwest of Tirana, the capital. If a deal is cut, and several U.S. officers confirmed that it is being pursued seriously, the center would become the first military facility to be used by the United States in a post-Communist country.

U.S. spy planes from the Defense Department and the CIA have used Albanian bases free of charge since early 1994 for reconnaissance missions over the former Yugoslavia. An American Coast Guard captain helped draft Albania's maritime law. Defense Mapping Agency experts are sketching its seas.

In short, the relationship has all the trappings of a military love affair. The reason the United States has adopted this small country of 3.3 million people as a penniless brother involves the key place Albania occupies in one of the world's most hazardous regions: the Balkans. Tirana lies just 180 miles from Sarajevo. With Greece to the south, the remnant Yugoslav federation of Serbia and Montenegro to the north, newly independent Macedonia to the east and the Adriatic and Ionian seas to the west, Albania has been damned by geography to possess a strategic value far outweighing its population and paltry economy, in which the average salary is only $60 a month.

Albania's status as the homeland of ethnic Albanians has also granted this small state special importance in an area where ethnic tensions already have erupted in Croatia and Bosnia. The Balkans' 9 million Albanians are the region's second-largest ethnic group after the Serbs.

Touting facilities in his country as "less risky and less expensive" than those in nearby Croatia and Italy, Albanian president Sali Berisha welcomed U.S. or NATO use of any Albanian military base in the event of a peace deal in Bosnia and Croatia.

"The Balkans are blazing. These flames should be extinguished, and the only way is NATO presence," he said in an interview. "We welcome the Americans. They are the key to our stability."

On a visit to inspect a joint exercise of Albanian and American troops in mid-October, General John M. Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, reminded Albanians that the American interest in the fate of Albania dated back to President Woodrow Wilson, who intervened at the end of World War I to keep European powers from dividing it up.

"How thrilled he would be if he could visit Albania today to see that dream come alive and to see young American soldiers, side by side with their Albanian comrades, building a future of trust, friendship and partnership between our two countries," General Shalikashvili to Albania's top military brass.

U.S. officials say a stable and pro-Western Albania is critical to the emerging U.S. policy in the Balkans because it increases the chances of a peaceful solution to the search for minority rights for the 2 million Albanians in Yugoslavia and those in neighboring Macedonia, where they make up 23 percent of the population. In addition, with Albania firmly in the Western camp, this small country can anchor a network of security stretching from Macedonia through Albania, then up to Croatia, Hungary and Romania, that officials in Washington say is designed to deter Serbian-led Yugoslavia from further aggressive adventures.

But if the theory is relatively clear-cut, the reality of U.S. engagement in Albania is a little less so.

With a military budget of only $53 million a year, Albania has the poorest army in Europe. Many of its conscripts, even the color guard around the Defense Ministry in Tirana, have holes in their boots. And the army still refuses to issue them socks, leaving them to make do with rags to keep their feet warm in the brutal Albanian winters.

Faced with such poverty, a debate has arisen in the army between those who want to copy the expensive military structure of the United States and those who back a less conventional, cheaper force modeled more on Albania's experience during World War II.

One argument in favor of the U.S model is that it would be a good way for the army to overcome the legacy of almost 50 years of the paranoid dictatorship of Enver Hoxha.

"We need to be brainwashed again," said Major General Adem Copani, defense adviser to Mr. Berisha. "We must forget everything we learned in the past and move on."

# A Philosopher In the Bedroom

**Jordan Elgrably**

RASERO
By Francisco Rebolledo
Louisiana State University Press.
552pp. $24.95

WE LIVE in an age in which information is often prized over knowledge, high-tech weaponry and toxic chemicals are destroying the earth, and the culture of reality, because it appears more relevant than literature, has overrun the culture of storytelling. This, at any rate, is the thesis of Rasero, a mature first novel by Mexican author Francisco Rebolledo, a former chemistry teacher at Mexico City's National Autonomous University. A roman-fleuve in the tradition of such distinguished practitioners as Tolstoy, Dickens or James, Rasero seems almost anachronistic in form, yet decidedly is not. It is fundamentally a subversive book, one that challenges our notion of history and cleverly juxtaposes Reality and Truth to prove that — in the end — interpretation is everything.

First published in Mexico in 1993, Rasero is the winner of the 1994 Pegasus Prize for Latin-American literature. It appears here in an excellent English translation by Helen R. Lane, who has brought us such writers as Augusto Roa Bastos, Octavio Paz and Mario Vargas Llosa.

The novel's eponymous hero, Fausto Rasero, is an 18th-century Andalusian who has the unusual distinction of having known many of the key figures of the Enlightenment. A resident of Paris throughout much of the book, Rasero hobnobs with Diderot, Voltaire, Rousseau, Robespierre and philosopher David Hume. He befriends the great chemist Antoine Lavoisier, who discovered oxygen and formulated the modern chemical dictum "Nothing is lost, nothing is created." Rasero even lends young Mozart his piano.

But the novel's central conceit surrounds Rasero's unrepentant womanizing and the troubling, otherworldly visions he experiences during his carnal exploits — visions that haunt him for much of his long life until he comes to realize that he has, in fact, been seeing "the future as though I were observing it through a window." Allowing him to virtually witness the Spanish Civil War, the Nazi concentration camps, Hiroshima, the Vietnam War and man's launch into space, Rasero's visions — inexorably linked to sexual climax (though never to onanism) — are "a sort of sickness." Indeed, an addiction.

Rebolledo explores his hero's addiction through intense relationships with the high minds of the age, and with several famous women such as the Marquise de Pompadour. He makes much mention of breasts, buttocks, seduction and sexual pleasure — evidence of Rasero's great joie de vivre, of a love of the flesh as much as the spirit. He views love-making as "that fleeting instant when we cease to be what we are, and turn into divinities . . ." A contemporary of Casanova, Rasero is such a romantic that the first time he sees the body of his beloved, Mariana, he regrets not having "the skill or the talent . . . to immortalize the impressive figure on canvas."

In his 552-page tome, Rebolledo generously employs interior monologues to explore not only Rasero's life but nearly everyone Rasero ever meets. Going into nearly every character's consciousness can make for some long-winded digressions; 10 to 15 percent shorter, the novel might have been a much more powerful work. Yet for those who have the luxury of languorous afternoons or evenings, Rasero may well be the contemporary equivalent of a 19th-century classic, its expansive narrative an antidote to the usual tripe that dominates today's bestseller lists.

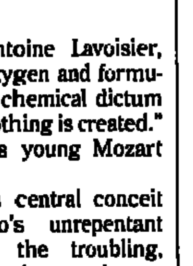


ILLUSTRATION: ANTHONY RUSSO

Perhaps the author's suspicions about the veracity of history explain why he felt the need to re-imagine the Enlightenment at such length: "Don't believe a word of what they taught you in school," Rasero admonishes his surrogate son. "History is written by the powerful to justify their acts; that makes it as fantastic as a work by Swift."

Throughout, Rasero contrasts the ideological differences between Voltaire and Rousseau — between the belief that social reform and individual liberty can advance the human condition and the conviction that "our acts lead us to a worse and worse future . . . that history defeats us." Rasero's apocalyptic visions, 200 years before our time, clearly weigh on the side of Rousseau.

Certainly Rebolledo sees no reason why science and art can't coexist in a work of art. In this he frequently brings to mind the late novelist Primo Levi, who introduced his love of chemistry in The Periodic Table and other works. Rebolledo uses science and art to organize world chaos into manageable, even ecstatic moments. To call what Rebolledo has done Magic Realism, as his publisher does, however, is to dismiss the absolute freshness of his voice. Rebolledo is faithful above all to his characters and their history, which may be, after all, more truthful than many historiographies of the period. Even as Rasero is steeped in the European tradition of the novel, it creates its own space by seeing the future so clearly in the past.

An artist's unconscious, often wild and brilliant, is his finest asset. Rebolledo's has produced a work of great clarity, wisdom and mirth. His Rasero is one of the most elegant novels to appear in the Spanish language in years.

Jordan Elgrably is a novelist.

# Mexico: So Near and Yet So Foreign

**Saul Landau**

THE MEXICO SHOCK
Its Meaning for the United States
By Jorge G. Castaneda
New Press. 254pp. $23

IN THE late 1980s, free traders declared an "economic miracle" in Chile, referring to its phenomenal growth rate under free-market policies. Then, in 1993, the neo-liberals hailed Mexico as the next marvel on the horizon — until the Zapatistas rebelled, the peso collapsed and the country spiraled into a virtual telenovela of murders, kidnappings and coverups at the highest levels.

Jorge Castaneda, an astute Mexican political scientist, dismisses the neo-liberal agenda as mythology. Free-market policies in Mexico, he argues, have increased poverty, widened income disparity and created greater obstacles on the path to healthy development. Castaneda suggests that only democratization of the State, not the "facade of electionism," will rid the country of a system that has kept the same authoritarian party in power for six decades.

Castaneda's book of recent essays maintains that his country's future is inextricably linked to American politics. Mexico's poverty spills over the border; agribusiness still needs low-wage labor; Mexican immigration skews border politics by contributing to a "de-democratization" process in California. Mexican migrants, he points out, constitute "a significant sector of the so-called California underclass." By the end of the century, he argues, the state will have a "foreign plurality" that "works, consumes, and pays taxes, but does not vote, run for office, organize or carry much political clout." California Latinos, Castaneda asserts, make up 26 percent of the population but cast only 10 percent of the vote, helping to make possible the passage of the anti-immigrant Proposition 187.

Ironically, as anti-Mexican prejudice was intensifying in border states, Castaneda notes, "the Bush and Clinton administration reinvented Mexico" as a worthy free-trade partner. In their quest to sell Mexico as part of the free-trade agreement, administration officials downplayed immigration and instead emphasized Mexico's "growing, dynamic" market for U.S. goods and services — read U.S. jobs.

President Clinton praised Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari for privatizing state-owned properties, thus converting Mexico into a worthy trading partner. Henry Kissinger hailed the Harvard-educated Salinas, before his alleged involvement in criminal activities, for his miraculous transformation of a corrupt, authoritarian nation into a modern, Western nation.

Hogwash, responds Castaneda. "Mexico is not a modern country," nor has NAFTA helped it progress. Step across the border from Chula Vista, Calif., to Tijuana, Mexico. Barefoot Indian women with runny-eyed children hold out packages of Chiclets. Walk past droves of cab drivers offering to drive you to unseemly experiences and past the hovels, past open sewers with parasite-infested kids playing in the murky waters — and past the endless rows of foreign-owned factories (*maquiladoras*) that exploit Mexico's low-wage labor force and lax environmental regulations.

The Mexican Shock should jolt readers to recognize the obvious: Mexico has tens of millions of impoverished people and has recently sprouted 24 billionaires — five times more than Canada. The top 20 percent of Mexico's population is 27 times richer than the bottom 20 percent. Apply logic, Castaneda urges. Political stability does not derive from such radically skewed distribution patterns — on top of centuries of systematic injustice.

Last year, Mexico acknowledged its economic ills, scarcity of foreign reserves and dangerous trade imbalances, and devalued the peso. Castaneda's publisher unfortunately left unedited a 1993 essay in which he predicted that there "probably will not be a major devaluation of the currency." Such editorial oversights, however, do not detract from his insights into Mexico and U.S.-Mexican relations, especially NAFTA.

If not for the White House granting Mexico its equivalent of the financial Good Housekeeping seal of approval, Mexican bonds would have attracted investors as strongly as the sale of the Brooklyn Bridge. Promises of jobs and markets that accompanied NAFTA propaganda in both countries proved exaggerated. Middle-class Mexicans have not become a significant market for U.S. goods — especially with their purchasing power drastically reduced.

The Zapatista revolt revealed to the world the emptiness of Mexican claims about modernity. On January 1, 1994, after the implementation of the trade agreement, ski-masked peasants in Chiapas exposed the thin facade of Mexico's democracy. The Zapatistas posed this question: How does a global-trading, business-oriented government simultaneously serve Indian farmers, marginalized for half a millennium?

The Zapatistas forced many Mexicans to acknowledge what they knew, Castaneda suggests. Their government is "largely corrupt and unchallenged" with "the merest trappings of the rule of law." But Castaneda goes beyond criticism. Developing an "end of revolution" thesis taken from his previous book, Utopia Unarmed, he uses The Mexico Shock to show the futility of trying to resurrect the bygone revolutionary era symbolized by Cuban and Central American guerrillas. The Zapatistas, he emphasizes, used armed force to attract attention, not to seize state power. They demanded "land for the peasants, dignity for Indians, democracy and free elections for all Mexicans. Revolution was not on their agenda."

Castaneda suggests his reformist paradigm for Mexico's ailing economy. Free-market, free-trading neoliberalism, he predicts, will bring violence and chaos. His alternative cure is rapid democratization, the only remedy around which consensus can form, to fight the twin ills of political corruption and economic neo-liberalism. This course has yet to be tried — anywhere. If the left could stop bickering, he suggests, it could forge a consensus to take Mexico into a unique form of 21st-century social democracy. If this is Castaneda's utopia, he has certainly armed it with fact and reason.

Saul Landau is a senior fellow at the Washington, D.C., Institute for Policy Studies.





# The generals keep control in Algeria

Will the Algerian military regime's success in the presidential election help restore the state, asks **Catherine Simon**

AN ELECTION plunged Algeria into a civil war in 1992. With Liamine Zeroual's convincing win in the November 16 presidential race, the hope now is that this time the ballot box will help Algeria find its way back to peace.

Exhausted by almost four years of violence, most Algerians disregarded Islamist calls to boycott the election. The 75 per cent turnout speaks for itself. As for the Kabyle Saïd Sadi's "democratic republicans", they too failed to win any significant support among a mostly Arab-speaking electorate.

There will obviously be cries from disappointed opposition leaders that the ballot boxes were stuffed. In 1991, it was the anti-Islamists, thrown into a panic by the fundamentalists' success, who cried foul. The roles are reversed today. This time round it will probably be the winners of the 1991 election, the three "fronts" — FIS (Islamic Salvation Front), FLN (National Liberation Front) and FFS (Socialist Forces' Front) — that will choose to complain. But whatever irregularities there may have been on November 16, there is no doubt that people enthusiastically went to the polls.

The question now is whether the ballot will prevail over the bullet. This is less certain.

The regime's victory is first and foremost a victory for the army. The 69 per cent of votes cast for President Zeroual looks like a plebiscite. Algeria, which was taken in hand by the military when it became independent 33 years ago, has undeniably given its generals a pat on the back. But was there ever a choice?

The democracy Algeria experienced between 1989 and 1992 was too short-lived. What the historian Mohamed Harbi calls the "authoritarian decompression" did not help the Algerians to change the course of things. The process of learning the fundamentals of political life was abruptly terminated when elections were suspended on January 11, 1992. The power struggle was again reduced to its usual equation of "force and cunning".

The massive security precautions mounted at the polling stations provided eloquent testimony to the threat still posed by armed Islamic groups whose barbarous activities have been given widespread media exposure. The presidential election, while giving a better idea of the balance of forces in the country, could hasten the process of driving the Islamists underground into "sanctuaries". But the chief message of this election was not directed at them. The voters' enthusiasm for the status quo, says political scientist Luis Martinez, shows that the regime's social bases have widened.

There has been a silver lining to the murderous crisis tearing Algeria apart. Many small businessmen, who used to work with the FIS, have seen their interests enhanced both by the war — which has caused most damage to state-owned companies — and by liberalising measures that allow access to foreign currency and contacts with government departments.

The status of the non-military security personnel, such as community guards, members of private militias and police informers, clearly depends on the success of the repressive policy.



The ballot box will be your coffin . . . 'We didn't allow quite enough'

A part of the FLN's traditional support base, such as veterans of the war of independence, could be expected to be among the regime's supporters. Many leading Algerians tend to agree with Martinez's contention that the recognition won at the polls by the military should ultimately help to bring the state back to power in Algeria.

This analysis, however, omits from the equation the problem of Algeria's youth, who form a majority in the country. The "new" rulers are going to have some difficulty weaning them away from petty crime and the temptation to go underground. Also left out of consideration is the issue of the army's cohesion. Once the political honeymoon is over, deep-seated rivalries may resurface.

"The problem with Zeroual," an official close to the generals noted shortly before the presidential election, "is that he is incapable of effective dialogue or repression. Given this, it's not certain he'll complete his mandate."

(November 18)

# Protest wins wide support

**Michel Delberghe**

BUOYED by the success of November 21's string of protests against severely underfunded universities by 100,000 students from across France, student leaders have been planning a large-scale demonstration in Paris on November 30.

They are pressing the government for F2 billion ($411 million) together with a framework law, but the minister of education Francis Bayrou's margin for manoeuvre is narrow. He has confirmed the government's plan to help universities worst hit by the cash crisis; some 20 institutions across France have shut down. A first estimate suggests that between F150-170 million may be allocated, as well as 200 new teaching posts and an equal number in university administration.

The second part of the plan involves an examination of the future of university education. Bayrou has indicated he is opposed to selective admission. He wants six months of consultation with the universities before a national session on renovating them is organised.

From the start of the dispute, the minister has refused to meet students' unions, but now appears to be ready to enter into negotiations on the plan's contents and details.

Bayrou is in a difficult position. He does not want to seem to be yielding to pressure. As Josselin de Rohan, who heads the RPR in the Senate, points out, "it is inconceivable for budgetary regulation of higher education to be decided on the street".

However, Bayrou has to show students he is prepared to talk to them if he is to prevent the dispute spreading even further.

(November 23)

# Poland teaches Church a lesson

The Catholic clergy is reacting the way it did under communist rule, notes **Henri Tincq**

**ALONG with Lech Walesa, the Roman Catholic Church was the other big loser in the Polish presidential election. This is not the first setback it has suffered. In 1989, the two candidates it supported against Adam Michnik in Radom and Jacek Kuron in Warsaw were beaten. Four years later, none of the political parties claiming to have its backing won a seat in the Diet — a double setback for a clergy playing a central role in politics.**

**Given the defeated president's convictions, his almost filial ties to Pope John Paul II and the backing of a host of bishops and priests behind him, the Church has suffered a third rejection by Polish voters. This failure is its most symbolic reversal so far.**

**Photos showing Lech Walesa saying the rosary right in the middle of a picket organised by strikers at the Lenin shipyard in Gdansk have gone round the world. The visits by the Pope, a former archbishop of Cracow, in**



Kwasniewski: opposed the grip of the Church on Poland

**1979, 1983, 1987 and 1991 had ended up identifying the struggle for labour unions and political freedom with the fight for the Roman Catholic faith.**

**The setback is all the more stinging as the winner, Aleksander Kwasniewski, had campaigned against what he held to be the Church's oppressive grip on the country. Systematically demonising the ex-communist candidate in their pastoral letters, a large number of clergy and the Church hierarchy commended Walesa to their flocks. The primate of Poland, Cardinal Glemp, even characterised the run-off election as a struggle between "Christian" values and "neo-paganism".**

**Walesa and the Polish church could reflect on the ingratitude of their fellow countrymen. The Church was practically the only social force that the communist authorities never succeeded in corrupting, dividing or crushing.**

**It has had its outstanding figures (Cardinals Hlond and Wyszynski, Karol Wojtyla, who later became Pope), its intellectuals such as Tadeusz Mazowiecki and Jerzy Turowicz (editor of Tygodnik Powszechny), its men of the common people (Lech Walesa) and martyr priests (Jerzy Popieluszko).**

**Its resistance to communism surprised the world and showed a way forward. In doing this, it was in strict conformity with a Catholicism that has always symbolised the Polish nation's historic continuity and a past that shows this country has survived only thanks to the resources of its culture, values and faith.**

**But the communist regime's fall, the return to sovereignty, the opening up to the West and a free-market economy have bewildered a church accustomed to standing up to communism, not to looking for compromises dictated by democratic debate, pluralism and secularisation.**

**Casting around to find its place in the new order of things, the Church has been wrong-footed by secular and liberal developments, and almost despite itself found itself reviving the position of the counter-society that was its rôle under the communist regime. Without consultation, it imposed religious education in schools, led a campaign against pornography and abortion, tried to recover its property, and negotiated a "concordat" enshrining its status and relations with the state.**

**This activism finally exasperated the public, particularly younger Poles who, as a result of regular contacts with the West, have rebelled against clerical militantism.**

**The Church's inability to adapt to the post-communist period is still a matter of surprise. The reason has to be looked for in the culture of a clergy sure of its beliefs, unshakeably clinging to its traditional faith and firmly standing behind its primate, Pope John Paul II, surpliced priests and the Black Madonna of Czestochowa.**

**The fall of communism paradoxically enough marked the end of a golden age for the Church. But instead of keeping pace with a maturing civil society, the Church keeps balking. Its confrontation with a totalitarian authority had not prepared it for coping with modernity.**

**The Church's return to its natural opposition role could help it tide over the transition with the help of figures who are said to be open-minded such as the episcopate's general secretary, Msgr Tadeusz Pieronek.**

**The new president, Kwasniewski, doubtless intends to go easy on a Church that still has a large numerical following. Some even believe he could speed up ratification of the concordat prepared in 1993 by Hanna Suchocka's government.**

**At any rate, the defeat Lech Walesa and the Polish Church have recently suffered will also cause some rethinking in Rome where the Polish "model" has often been held up to a secularised and sometimes discredited West as a force of Christian revival.**

**(November 22)**

# Songbird turns dove of peace

Enrico Macias, whose songs preach reconciliation between Jews and Arabs, has just been entrusted with a peace mission by Unesco. **José-Alain Fralon** on the career of this highly successful singer

HOW DOES Enrico Macias do it? Since his Paris debut 33 years ago, the man whose exotic and slightly old-fashioned songs are immediately recognisable has sold more than 50 million records all over the world and managed to remain hugely popular.

To understand the mystery, you have to see him perform. Most people at the November 2 premiere of his new show at the Olympia music hall in Paris were *pieds-noirs*, chiefly from the rag trade, who have been faithful fans of Macias ever since they, like him, had to leave Algeria in a hurry when the country gained independence in 1962.

The audience included lots of medallion men with gentle eyes, unruly beards and whiter-than-white shirts. The women, their hair mostly platinum blonde or hennaed, had put on their most glamorous outfits for the occasion — which, as always, was a bittersweet journey down memory lane.

One or two people furtively wiped away tears as Macias struck up the first chords of "J'Ai Quitté Mon Pays" (I Left My Country). Everyone joined in the choruses of several well-known songs, but kept silent during "Un Berger Vient de Tomber" (A Shepherd Has Just Died), which Macias wrote after the assassination of President Anwar Sadat.

Then they began to ululate as Macias launched into a long and sinuous recitative in both Arabic and Hebrew. A dozen women got up and danced. Gradually all the spectators were singing, clapping their hands and cheering the man who describes himself as "the beggar of love".

A young woman, who probably regarded Macias as naff beyond belief but had come along to please her parents born in an Algeria she had never known, sat glumly next to me. Yet even she was caught up in the fever and started dancing and laughing.

Macias has been producing the same effect since 1962. In October of that year, during a TV programme devoted to the plight of *pieds-noirs* from Algeria, French viewers heard a strange song about exile sung in almost whispered tones by a chubby young man with doe eyes and slicked-back hair. Perspiration dripping on to his guitar, he crooned: "I've left my country, I've left my sun/My life, my sad life drags on for no reason/Sun, sun of my lost country!"

Macias had just been through an ordeal in two acts. On June 12, 1962, two militants belonging to the Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN) murdered Raymond Leyris in Constantine. Leyris was both a spokesman for the Jewish community and a master of *malouf*, the Constantine version of a strictly codified Arab-Andalusian musical tradition brought to North Africa by Jews who had been driven out of Catholic Spain in 1492.

On important festive occasions, whether Jewish, Arab or Christian, the people of Constantine called on the services of "Uncle Raymond", who knew 5,000 pieces of music by heart, and of whom the Arab élite used to say: "If you weren't Jewish, we'd call you Mohamed."

Leyris knew he had a successor in the person of Gaston Ghrenassia, the 15-year-old son of friends who was mad about the guitar. "I so respected Raymond I'd never have dared sing in front of him," says Ghrenassia (alias Enrico Macias). So he sang with a local gypsy group, one of whom was called Enrico.

"As I was too young to sing in cafés where alcohol was served, I blackened my face with charcoal and went in with the gypsies. I ended up being called 'the little Enrico'." Hence the choice of Enrico when he came to choose a stage name.

The Jewish community in Constantine knew that Leyris's murder meant they had become undesirables again and, four centuries after leaving Spain, would once again have to go into exile. They were the first of the *pieds-noirs* to leave, and they did so as discreetly as possible, to avoid retribution from both the Organisation de l'Armée Secrète (OAS), which favoured keeping Algeria French, and the FLN.

"It was both a terrible wrench and a relief," Macias says. He composed "J'Ai Quitté Mon Pays" while sailing for France on the Ville d'Alger. He arrived in Marseilles with Leyris's daughter Suzy, whom he had married, and 600 francs (the equivalent today of $800). He made a token application for a teaching job, for which he had been trained, but preferred to try his luck as a singer.

It was no easy task to "sell" such an outlandish singer at a time when *yé-yé* [the French version of rock and roll] was riding high. The sleeve of his first record described him as "the son of an Andalusian father and a Berber mother", and the winner of a prize for Andalusian song which had never existed.

MACIAS wanted to do what Charles Aznavour had done: adapt his own musical tradition to French popular song. He was not very successful at first. "Everything changed after his television appearance," says Vic Talar, his agent. "Although he still sang before virtually empty auditoriums in northern France, the minute we got south of Lyons the audiences got bigger, and he was a great hit in Marseilles."

The *pied-noir* community, concentrated in the south of France, had found "their" minstrel.

But Macias's songs were not to everyone's liking. He soon clashed with the far right, who saw the *pied-noir* community as a reservoir of potential activists.

Macias knew what kind of people he was up against: on August 5, 1934, his mother's family was massacred by Arabs whose feelings had been whipped up by fascist thugs.

Soon his career "gelled", as he puts it. He succeeded, miraculously, in getting the whole country to hum his tunes while hanging on to his original *pied-noir* fans. He scooped up several awards, including the prestigious Prix Charles-Cros and, with L'Etranger, a sad lament about immigrant workers, a prize awarded by the anti-racist organisation LICRA.



Algerian-born Enrico Macias in 1968: unofficial top of the pops in the Arab world PHOTOGRAPH: CLAUDE DELORME-PHILIPS

Macias was still mocked for being slightly over the top, for oozing goodwill, for writing simplistic lyrics. But no one could really work up a grudge against him. So loyal were his fans that they were utterly non-plussed when he acted in a play where he was required to dress up in drag and be unfaithful to his wife. Although his stab at a stage career was not a success, he would like to have another go. "He'd be perfect in Twelve Angry Men — in the part of the good guy of course," says Talar.

Surprisingly, Macias's career also gelled outside France. He had such a triumph in New York that he was urged by showbiz professionals to go for an international career. We shall never know whether he could have succeeded as Julio Iglesias did a few years later. He needed his friends too much, he said. And he did not want to learn how to speak English "properly".

One of Macias's fondest memories is of the occasion, on September 24, 1979, when he sang before 8,000 enthusiastic Egyptians. Sadat had lifted the ban that had been placed on certain performing artists because of their support for Israel.

Although Macias had not been allowed to sing in any Arab country since 1963, he had remained unofficial top of the pops in that part of the world, with thousands listening to him secretly in the casbah of Algiers or the souks of Cairo.

He met Sadat, who asked him to sing for him. Macias remembered a song he had written 10 years earlier which had the chorus "The great pardon, the great pardon, it has long been written in the night of time". Sadat was deeply moved. Macias then sang "La Folle Espérance" (The Wild Hope) in Arabic. He has never forgotten their encounter.

He continued to find it hard to say no to his friends. At the 1992 regional elections, he stood — in a "non-electable" tenth place — on a list headed by the fashion designer Daniel Hechter and sponsored by Bernard Tapie. Tapie managed to find the right words to persuade Macias: "You must give people back what you've taken from them!"

Macias remains a favourite target of abuse from the far-right National Front (FN). In July 1988, he had to cancel a concert in the town of Marignane after his posters were defaced with slogans like "Instrument of Israel!", "Filthy Jew" and "Friend of the Arabs", and anonymous telephone calls suggested he might be risking his life if he sang.

Macias does not forget. When another singer of Jewish origin, Patrick Bruel, announced he was going to boycott towns and cities that had come under FN control, Macias followed suit and deplored the lack of solidarity shown by other performing artists: "We'd be much more efficient if we were more united in our fight against the FN."

Macias realises that stances of this kind may alienate some of his fans. "Too bad," he says. "People like that haven't got the message of my songs. In any case I don't want anyone who regrets the passing of Vichy, Pétain or Laval in my audience."

One of his songs goes: "I'm a Spanish Jew, an Armenian Greek, I'm a Creole Frenchman, an Arab Jew." Enrico Macias is clearly cut out for the peace mission he has just been given by Unesco.

**(November 15)**

# Brush with the pianists of last century

**Alain Lompech**

Les Grands Virtuoses Du Piano
by Wilhelm von Lenz
translated from the German by
Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger
Flammarion 222pp 140 francs

IN THE absence of any sound recording of the great 19th century piano virtuosi, a written record is naturally of great interest. It is to be found in Les Grands Virtuoses du Piano, a book of memoirs by Wilhelm von Lenz (1809-1883) first published in German in 1872 and recently translated into French.

Lenz worked as a censor and an adviser at the Russian imperial court. He was also a pianist who studied under Franz Liszt and Frédéric Chopin. His book, Beethoven And His Three Styles, which is now something of a rarity, even in libraries, left a lasting impression on the way we look at that composer's work. He was also an enthusiastic supporter of the music of Carl Maria von Weber.

Lenz was a privileged and knowledgeable observer of the musical life of his period, and provides insights into the playing style of the great pianists with whom he was in close contact, such as Liszt, Chopin, Carl Tausig and Adolf Henselt.

In addition to those four, who form the core of his work, Lenz reports on more casual encounters with pianists such as Johann Baptist Cramer, Adolf Gutmann, F W Kalkbrenner and Sigismond Thalberg, as well as the composers Hector Berlioz and Giacomo Meyerbeer.

Lenz recounts a spat between Chopin and Meyerbeer on the subject of a mazurka played by Chopin: Meyerbeer claimed there were four beats to the bar, while Chopin insisted there were only three.

This book is full of shrewd musical assessments. Just occasionally they may seem a trifle Manichean. But value judgments are no doubt more acceptable in the field of the performing arts than elsewhere.

Lenz does not set out to offer "objective" memoirs. Instead, he creates a work of art by skilfully constructing his account, studding it with both juicy anecdotes and deadly barbs, and asserting his own credo.

The way he compares Chopin's feminine playing with Beethoven's masculine style may seem a little quaint, but it is preceded by an eloquent description of the Franco-Polish pianist at the keyboard.

Quite apart from the strange feeling procured by Lenz's skill as a writer, which makes one feel one can almost touch the pianists he is talking about, he gives us an insight into the way in which the virtuosi under discussion towered over their contemporaries, and the degree to which two of them at least, through their works, their pupils, and their pupils' pupils, still dominate musical life today.

**(October 13)**

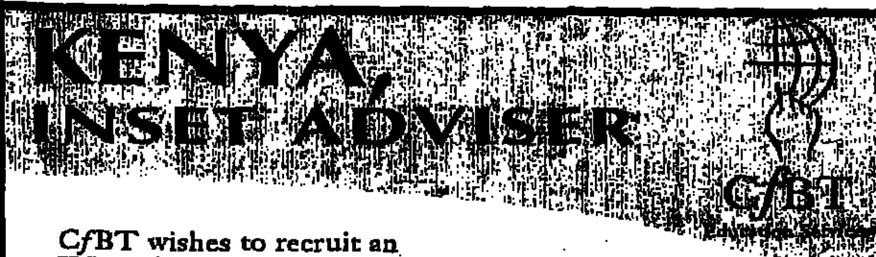
Le Monde

Directeur: Jean-Marie Colombani





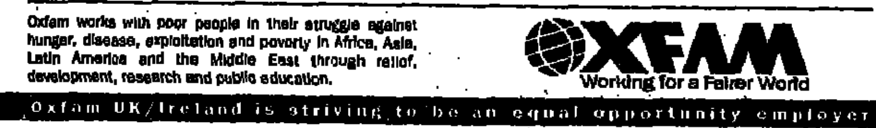











# An eye for the inner character

## Louis Malle

LOUIS MALLE, who has died aged 63, once said that it would take him a good 25 years to become a fully matured film-maker. That suggests a modesty few of his contemporaries of the French New Wave shared. They were convinced they had found a fresh way ahead after the "theatrical" offerings of the old French cinema, exemplified by Carné, Prévert and even the great Renoir.

Malle was not so sure. To him, Renoir was a god and he felt he had "to work like hell to justify myself". At the same time, he deplored "the current emphasis on the auteur theory", recognising that film-making was not the result of one person's vision but of the hard work of many.

Given that thought, it is perhaps more easy to understand why, throughout his long career, there seemed to be no such thing as a typical Louis Malle film or one that perfectly exemplified his art. He bowed as much to the past as to the present or future. But his legacy now seems extraordinarily rich — more than 30 films, a half-dozen of them classics.

Which the half-dozen are depends as much on the individual watcher as on any official history of the post-second world war cinema. But many would include Zazie Dans Le Metro, for its breathless originality, Le Fou Follet, an almost stifling film about the last days of an alcoholic, Le Souffle Au Coeur, for its daringly innocent delineation of incest, Lacombe, Lucien as an essay on the true banality of evil, Atlantic City, as one of the best films ever made by a Frenchman in America, and Au Revoir Les Enfants, about school-days under the Nazi Occupation.

These films alone would ensure him a place among the best European directors of recent decades but they would not give a complete picture of the man. He was also fascinated by documentary, having worked with Jacques Cousteau, and his seven-part series Phantom India, which got him into such trouble, is still a model of tenacious if romantic inquiry into another and stranger culture than his own.

The truth is that Malle did not always get his due precisely because his films were not easily classifiable but also for the better reason that his attitude towards his material was not always clear. He invariably seemed most sure when dealing with young people, whose ideas were also not formed, like the boys in Le Souffle Au Coeur, Lacombe, Lucien and Au Revoir Les Enfants. In these cases, he dug deep and successfully into youthful psyches and the effect of the guilty adult world upon them.

You could say he was a classicist by nature but one who often favoured, at any rate up to the mid-point of his career, the exotic or baroque. He also had too much of a sense of humour to believe that there was one path down which he should walk: "There are many journeys we can take in this peculiar thing called life. I just follow my instincts rather than anyone else's road. That way I can only blame myself for stepping in the shit occasionally."

You could say that Black Moon, Pretty Baby, Crackers and possibly Damage were occasions when he did lose his step, and it is certainly true that his work varied greatly in strength and purpose. But, as befits a man who once said that Renoir's The Rules Of The Game was his single, most overwhelming experience in the cinema, and whose Milou In May was a direct tribute to Renoir, he never gave up the struggle for perfection, nor did he think that he had ever achieved it.

Louis Malle: the modest master

What he did achieve was a mastery of style through which he illustrated a real feel for his characters not just in the big moments of their lives but in the small too. Detail was often the distinctive element in his films and his feeling for the apparently insignificant made his best films if not great, then very nearly so.

For instance, the moment in Le Souffle Au Coeur when the 15-year-old Laurent has his first sexual experience with his mother is traversed in a way that is the opposite of sensational and ends not with drama but with laughter — a stroke that defuses the sequence of prurience entirely and moves it truly into something very like real life.

He once said that life was too short and interesting to be making movies all the time and that he needed a gap between projects to find out more about it. People who work all the time, like Godard and Altman, he found "awe-inspiring".

"If I did that," he once said, "my films would get worse, not better. I like to spend a year or two doing not very much, then to play at being a film director for six months. Actually, even then I consider myself more of a *chef d'orchestre* than an auteur. For myself, film-making is a collective experience or it is nothing. I depend so much on everybody else."

Perhaps the key to his best work lies in the story David Hare, who collaborated with him in Damage, told him. He reminded Malle of the poet who upset a supporter by telling him that it had taken only 25 minutes to write a certain poem. But that, on the other hand, it had taken him 25 years to reach the position where he was able to write it.

"Absolutely, absolutely," Malle replied. "It was Sven Nykvist [the Swedish cinematographer] who first drew my attention to this very thing when he said it had taken him 20 years to achieve simplicity."

He added that when he showed people the script of My Dinner With André, in which there is considerably more talk than action, they all said it was a wonderful text but not a movie. "I've never been able to understand that. After all, in one of my first films, Le Fou Follet, what is there? Just Maurice Ronet in a room, and he's going to kill himself. This kind of cinema is completely riveting to me. I went to 25 minutes of Speed and I was bored to death. I had to leave."

Fortunately, though he went to America and almost, but not quite, conquered, he didn't have to make Speed or Batman or any action film. Instead, at least one of his films there, Atlantic City, proved that you could look at America with European eyes and find more in it than many an American director.

It also enabled Burt Lancaster to give one of the performances of his life as an ageing, small-time criminal who hangs around Atlantic City doing odd jobs and taking care of his dead boss's broken-down mistress. Of Malle, Lancaster afterwards said: "He saw inside the character and he told me to express that. Not the outward bit but the inner. No one asked me to do that before."

It's an epitaph Malle would much appreciate. It wasn't ideology on which he sought to base his films, nor was it a search for proper artistic expression or technical prowess, even though he did indeed search for both those things.

It was, especially towards the end of his career, the search for the inner truths about the characters he portrayed. That's why actors liked him and why his last work, Vanya On 42nd Street, was so unexpectedly successful.

It is almost a chamber piece, and an entirely unadorned run-through of the Chekhov masterpiece which lets the actors express themselves and, in doing so, gave new life to the author himself.

Being an unselfish man, he liked the thought of that — bringing someone else's talent to a new audience. We will miss his own talent, his slightly pessimistic wisdom, his cinematic grace and his personal polish and humanity.

**Derek Malcolm**

Louis Malle, film director, born October 30, 1932; died November 23, 1995

# Burmese democrat takes path to peace

Aung San Suu Kyi, the pro-democracy leader, talks to **Catherine Field** about life after six years of house arrest in Rangoon



**Aung San Suu Kyi in the garden of the villa where she was confined for six years** PHOTOGRAPH: DANIEL SIMON

*IN SOME* ways, life for Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi was easier when she was under house arrest in her family's crumbling villa on the shores of Rangoon's Inya Lake.

There, locked away for six years, she became a martyr to democracy. In the four months since her surprising release, she has had to play the political strategist.

"I would like democracy now if that were possible, but the Burmese people are practical enough, sensible enough, to know that we cannot have it straight away," said Suu Kyi, aged 50. "But that does not mean I expect them to wait until the next century or anything like that."

She insists that politics itself — even in Burma where the military junta, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (Slorc), rules with an iron fist — need not be a grubby business: "It doesn't have to be — it is people who are grubby and nasty. Politics by itself is neither grubby nor nasty nor good. It is what you make of it."

The road Suu Kyi has taken is one of reconciliation. But it is also obvious that, so far, Slorc is winning.

Is Suu Kyi ready to take difficult decisions when the time comes? "Of course. It doesn't mean that one gets everything right but it is one's intentions that count."

Suu Kyi emerged as a charismatic leader of a pro-democracy uprising that swept Burma in 1988 but was brutally put down by the military. Confined in July 1989 for "endangering the state", she received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991. The military ignored the landslide victory in the 1990 general election by the National League for Democracy which Suu Kyi co-founded.

She is quick to talk about others who are still serving harsh prison terms for their part in the pro-democracy campaign and is always ready to be photographed with groups of campaigners who come to the house. She evinces determination and an iron will as she declares: "Patience is a virtue — but not indefinite patience. Indefinite patience can deteriorate into passivity."

The National League for Democracy, she says, is Burma's only legitimate government — unlike Slorc, which seized power in 1988 at gunpoint. "It is not a legitimate government. They themselves have said they are only a de facto government."

On weekdays Suu Kyi's diary is crammed with 30-minute meetings with League members and leaders and other pro-democracy groups; on Saturdays and Sundays she addresses the crowds that mill outside her house.

"Rebuilding the movement is almost like physical therapy — trying to get the political muscles working after prolonged immobility. The party has been tremendously repressed; they [Slorc] have brought up all kinds of regulations that made it almost impossible for any political party to move and it has been very difficult. A lot of our members have been expelled, imprisoned; some, of course, have gone over the border. But despite that, the National League for Democracy is very much alive even if it isn't kicking."

In October the election commission ruled that Suu Kyi had broken a law banning changes to the party's central executive committee without its approval — by being reappointed general secretary of the League. Her response is: "It is nothing to do with the government how we organise our executive committee. I am the general secretary and I will function as such."

She may have her own five-year agenda for bringing democracy to Burma but Slorc also has plans. Suu Kyi does not have a strong hand. By releasing her, Slorc managed to break out of its international isolation and is ending its economic dependence on China. This month Slorc's chairman, Senior General Than Shwe, will attend a meeting of heads of state of the Association of South-East Asian Nations in Bangkok. Japan has promised £1 million in humanitarian assistance and a £3.8 million debt relief grant.

Suu Kyi's hopes for a South Africa-style move towards national reconciliation have been dashed. Unlike there, where Nelson Mandela met President F W de Klerk only days after his release from 27 years' incarceration, Slorc has made no public response to Suu Kyi's calls for dialogue. Instead political stalemate prevails. "I am confident we will get there in the end. You see everywhere that [dialogue] is how problems end up at the table. But the ones who are wiser get to the table quicker and thereby avoid bringing too much suffering down on their country," she says. "I can do business with anybody. It depends on whether they are capable of doing business. It is for them to develop the will and for us to persuade them to develop the will."

But conciliatory words and a commitment to dialogue may not be enough. The League must decide whether to take part in the convention drafting guidelines for a new national constitution this week, to be attended by nearly 700 delegates, most of them hand-picked by the military.

Key clauses guarantee a quota of seats for the military and bar anyone married to a foreigner from taking power. Suu Kyi is married to an Oxford don, Michael Aris.

Slorc has invested enormous propaganda and prestige in the convention — Suu Kyi calls it a farce — and diplomats say the call by Slorc for all Burmese people to support the process indicates that the generals may agree to talks only within the forum's confines.

If the League decides to withdraw its candidates, that will trigger repercussions from Slorc and leave Suu Kyi and her party shut out. Alternatively, Suu Kyi could make it clear that League officials who attend the convention are taking orders from her.

*LAST MONTH* a 1,000-strong crowd of party faithful, diplomats and onlookers shunned Slorc's National Day ceremony and crowded into Suu Kyi's garden for an alternative celebration of Burmese nationalism.

The celebration linked today's pro-democracy movement with the nationalist independence fighters of the twenties, thirties and forties. Instead of starched grey uniforms, many, including Suu Kyi, wore tangerine tunics, a symbol of Burmese nationalism during British rule and Japanese occupation.

"The old leaders have made the country free," said Suu Kyi. "Now it is our duty to make the people free."

But it is uncertain that the masses are willing to repeat the brave pro-democracy stand of earlier years. In 1988 the movement was ignited by the end of the 26 year-long rule of the Burma Socialist Programme Party; people had few prospects and no expectations.

Today the military rules with a gun in one hand and promises of prosperity in the other. There is not the sense of confrontation waiting to happen; rather a mood for compromise. In the meantime, Suu Kyi and the generals circle each other like wary big cats. — *The Observer*

# Comprehensively put on the defensive

The United States is to stage a series of 'nuclear experiments' next year. **David Fairhall** asks why

*THE SEEMINGLY* innocent announcement by the US Department of Energy (DoE) of a new series of "subcritical nuclear experiments" beneath the Nevada desert has re-ignited fierce argument about how nuclear weapons scientists should fill their time if next year brings a comprehensive test ban.

The DoE carefully refers to "experiments". Others insist on calling them "tests". Are they a devious way of evading the ban, avoiding redundancy and developing new warhead designs? Or are they essential to maintain the safety of the remaining stockpile? The DoE's declared intention sounds clear enough. The six experiments are in support of the department's "stockpile stewardship" programme.

As in a warhead test, they involve exploding a mixture of conventional high explosive and nuclear material. But the nuclear component will consist of "aged" plutonium or uranium in such small quantities that it will not sustain a nuclear chain reaction. Hence the description "subcritical". There will be a smallish bang (the first experiment, on June 18 next year, will use 60-100lb of high explosive, plus an undisclosed amount of plutonium), but not a nuclear explosion. Therefore it will not breach President Bill Clinton's commitment, dutifully followed by Britain, to a "zero-yield" test ban.

It sounds innocent enough, but not everyone is convinced. In London, William Peden of Greenpeace promptly denounced the US programme as "reckless and irresponsible" because of its possible effect on the test ban negotiations in Geneva. The DoE was setting its own agenda, he argued, pre-empting decisions on what experiments should or should not be allowed.

Frank von Hippel, an arms control expert formerly with the Clinton administration, used softer language, but agreed that this was "an unwise precedent". The US could hardly complain, he pointed out, if other countries, perhaps with different motives, started doing their own subcritical experiments underground.

Von Hippel had been struck by the fact that at least the first experiment, codenamed Rebound, is being conducted 980ft beneath the desert, not in the sort of surface facility one might expect.

When the Natural Resources Defense Council raised this in Washington, the DoE said it was simply a matter of safety. An explosion the size of Rebound might breach a steel containment chamber on the surface, so it was best done deep underground. Fair enough, but it is also a good way of keeping Nevada's underground test facilities in running order — an important point when some delegations in Geneva are calling for test sites to be closed completely as an immediate arms control measure. This is "the burning issue", according to the NRDC's senior researcher Chris Paine, and the main reason the council is opposing the DoE programme.

Paine says the scientific purpose of Rebound is to gain more detailed data on the behaviour of plutonium at extreme pressures and temperatures so as to match the growing refinement of the US nuclear laboratories' computing capability. He does not believe this kind of experiment is technically necessary to maintain the safety and reliability of the 5,000 or so bombs the US intends to keep. With a radioactive half-life measured in thousands of years, "there is simply no indication that plutonium has an ageing problem — it isn't going anywhere". The real value of such experiments, Paine suggests, is to enable Los Alamos and Livermore to design new warheads confidently on a computer, when they are no longer allowed to test them in an explosion.

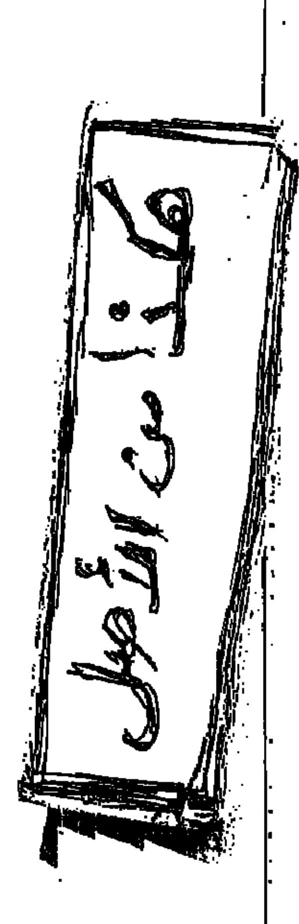
But the director of the London-based Verification Technology Information Centre (Vertic), Dr Patricia Lewis, is more inclined to give the DoE the benefit of the doubt. "It is important that scientists retain the expertise to keep weapons in the stockpile safe as long as we have them," she says, "and then have the expertise to dismantle them." Dr Lewis also welcomed the fact that whatever its motives, the DoE is prepared to explain what is going on and argue its case in public. British scientists may well be planning similar experiments, but rest assured we shall hear nothing until long after the event.

In the past, there were obvious reasons for guarding every nuclear secret. But if we want to establish and sustain a comprehensive test ban, some kinds of information should deliberately be disseminated.

The Foreign Office denied Labour's allegations that scientists at Aldermaston are being given access to data from the current French tests, but the sooner France gets its simulation technology up to speed, the sooner it may be prepared to stop blasting holes in the Moruroa and Fangataufa atolls.

In the meantime, the tests — if only organisations like Vertic were told their exact yield — offer a last chance to calibrate the seismic monitors on which a successful test ban will depend.

David Fairhall is the Guardian's defence correspondent







Home from home . . . A buying spree has seen buyers from the Far East snapping up luxury homes

# Estate agents gain from year of the tiger

*FAR EASTERN* buyers are fuelling demand for expensive country homes and luxury properties in London as they seek to secure their futures before the handover of Hong Kong to China, leading estate agents said last week, *writes James Meikle.*

One company has reported a five-fold increase in Far Eastern residents buying £750,000-plus country properties. Others said new and revamped flats in the heart of London were being snapped up by people benefiting from the tiger economies.

Knight, Frank and Rutley said nearly one in eight top-price country houses it sold this year, many in the Henley, Ascot, and Weybridge belt in Surrey, had been bought by Far East residents, compared with fewer than one in 25 last year.

Rupert Sweeting, of the company's country house department, said: "This flow of buyers . . . will probably increase next year as expatriates living in Hong Kong decide what they are going to do. In recent years, the Far East buyer has been purchasing flats for investment — many are now looking for homes in the country."

Savills, the international property specialist, reported that three-quarters of all new houses and flats in central London went to overseas buyers last year, with two-thirds of them from the Far East.

The market is being buoyed by the 20,000 to 30,000 Britons believed to be employed in Hong Kong. The Government says another 50,000 heads of families, or about 225,000 people in all, are being promised residence after the handover.

## Notes & Queries Joseph Harker

***WHEN I* die, I do not want any memorial. I also don't want to burden my dependants with the unnecessary expense of a funeral. What is the cheapest, legal, way to dispose of a human body in England?**

*YOU COULD* leave your body to a medical school for dissection by students. The snag is that they tend to accept only bodies that are unautopsied after death, non-cancerous and within easy range of a school.

If your next of kin are receiving either income support, housing benefit, disability working allowance or council tax benefit, the local Social Security will pay for a basic funeral.

If not, your relatives can refuse to arrange for disposal of your body, in which case the local authority is legally obliged to register the death and carry out the funeral, with reimbursement from the estate or next of kin where possible.

Your body can be buried by friends and relatives in a garden or farm with the permission of the landowner, without permission from the council planning department or the environmental health department. It is advisable that the burial be 250m from any drinking water supply, 30m from any other spring and 10m from any field drain. But a garden burial could severely reduce the value of a property.

In my view, the most satisfactory option is burial organised by the relatives in a nature reserve burial ground run by a farmer, local authority or wildlife trust, where a tree is planted instead of having a headstone. — *Nicholas Albery, director, Natural Death Centre, London*

*THE BODY* should be giftwrapped and left overnight on the back seat of an unlocked car. It will be gone by morning. Failing that, try mailing it Recorded Delivery. This guarantees it'll be lost for ever. — *Garry Chambers, London.*

***WHERE CAN* I find recordings of the Internationale and the old Soviet national anthem?**

*BILLY BRAGG* released an EP entitled "The Internationale" in 1990, which includes a stirring version of the title song, complete with a new translation written by himself. The complete recording information is: Billy Bragg, "The Internationale" Utility Records 9 60960-4, Elektra Entertainment, A Division of Warner Communications Inc. — *David A Williams, Toronto, Canada*

***WHAT ARE* the benefits of using a sauna, steam room or jacuzzi?**

*NONE,* unless you are an Eskimo, You might just as well boil, grill or fry yourself.

The idea that heat treatments are good for you is based on the toxemic theory of disease: that unhealthy living habits lead to enervation (decreased nerve energy). This results in checked elimination and a build-up of metabolic waste with in the organism. When this toxic matter accumulates beyond toleration point, the body uses sweat and an increased and thickened flow from the mucus membranes to eliminate it.

However, forcing the body to sweat when it doesn't need to is enervating, thus it prevents the body from sweating when it does need to. — *Alan Ashley, Bramford, Ipswich, Suffolk*

*SO THAT* from time to time you can be reassured that at least some people have bodies in worse condition than your own. — *Peter Barnes, Milton Keynes, Bucks*

***WHY WAS* the Black Prince so called? I read recently that he did not wear black armour. Could he have been a black man?**

*BOUTELL'S HERALDRY* (1983) describes the Black Prince's "shield for peace" as "Sable, three ostrich feathers quilled argent . . ." No doubt it was the sable field of the shield and surcoat on which he displayed his feathers that earned him his nickname. — *Stephanie Mullins, Oxted*

### Any answers?

***FRENCH* onion men were a feature of my 1950s childhood. They rode around on bicycles selling strings of onions. Where did they come from, and what has happened to them? — *Sally Baxendale, Sheffield***

Answers should be e-mailed to weekly@guardian.co.uk, faxed to 0171/44171-242-0985, or posted to The Guardian Weekly, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3HQ.

**Letter from India** Ritu Khanna

# Party's over in Simla

*AT THE* present rate of destruction the Himalayan forests apparently have another 25 years to live. If this is true, my three-year-old daughter must hurry if she is to catch a glimpse of what must be some of the world's most beautiful forests.

So, after a break of some 25 years I took the "toy train" to Simla. The town evoked memories of British India, the temporary home of the Viceroy when Delhi and the plains became too hot for comfort. Nostalgic Indians of my parents' generation recalled Christmas Eve at Clark's Hotel and dreamt of cream puffs and lemon meringues at Devicos. Old documents and photographs of my grandfather in suit and solar topi often bore the legend, "Viceregal Lodge, Simla". Photographs and reminiscences against which, in belated outbursts of Indian nationalism, I was later to rebel.

Today, Simla would rank low on the Viceroy's list of possible summer residences. Despite a government ban trees are still being "murdered" to make room for the growing population, and the bald hills and mountains have been shorn of their forest cover. The infrastructure of the town cannot cope with post-independence India. Traffic jams, exhaust fumes and power cuts all make Simla just another chaotic Indian town.

Yet, undeterred by its tarnished image, Simla's boarding schools continue to flourish. While we, at school in the heat and humidity of Calcutta, had sung heartily of winter winds blowing and clouds full of snow, our rosy-cheeked compatriots from the hills had actually had the experience of winter and snow.

Today Devicos displays a variety of multi-coloured Indian sweets, the Gaiety Theatre is more like an old boy's club, and Wildflower Hall, another one of the Viceroy's haunts, has burned down.

The ruins of the Raj would have to include the Alasia Hotel in Kasauli, a few miles out of Simla. Painted in the colonial colours of green, red and cream, it has obviously seen better days. We were shown room after forlorn room. Or, would we, my daughter and I, prefer a family suite? — a cluster of forlorn rooms. A picture of a scene more Alpine than Himalayan relieved the gloomy interior of our room. In the dining room barefooted, uniformed staff waited for work. There was one other guest, probably a permanent resident. She was a short, grey-haired Anglo-Indian woman who still mourned the departure of the British. Having frowned at us, she proceeded to order her lunch, not kebabs and naan, but mushroom soup and baked vegetables.

That afternoon the rain came down. We waited it out in the lounge. In a corner stood a sad-looking Christmas tree. The bar had fallen into ruin and the piano must have been silent since 1947. Behind a sofa that crumbled to the touch was a bookshelf. I pulled out a heavy, serious-looking book, Medicine And Family Hygiene In India, published in London in 1888. The book fell open at a chapter entitled, "Breast Irritation". The lights flickered and went out. Hail pelted down and piled up (suitably, I thought) like mounds of mothballs around the hotel. Buckets were placed strategically around the lounge to catch the drops. How hard the British must have tried to feel at home in this exotic country. Here, in the cool, wet weather and with familiar vegetation, one could temporarily forget the strangeness of the land. But only temporarily. A monkey peering in through the window proved the point neatly.

Cottages in the area bore names like "The Retreat", and even the government tourist lodge, in keeping with the spirit of the place, was called "Ross Common".

"This hotel is very, very old," said the staff, "it dates back to the British." Had every trace of the Raj been wiped out so thoroughly that a relatively recent period in Indian history was already ancient in these people's minds?

Darkness fell and the staff went back to sleep. It was as though a family was waiting for an ageing relative to pass away. Outside the hotel a tinsel star swayed to and fro in the wind. It was obviously a left-over from Christmas that nobody had bothered to take down. Even the Alasia had to admit that the party was definitely over.

# A Country Diary

**William Condry**

***MACHYNLLETH:* Mushrooms and toadstools were on my mind when I set off in the morning. It was foggy when I left but by the time I reached the foot of one of our local mountains, Tarren Hendre, there was brilliant sunshine and every hillside was painted with autumn colours. My way led at first up through steep woods past a succession of splendid waterfalls. There were many fungi under the trees, the first I found being the most spectacular. It was the well-known fly agaric, the big poisonous toadstool that has a scarlet cap with white spots on it. Then I came upon a group of chanterelles that were beautifully fresh, yellow and edible. After that there were more treasures but all the time I felt a little unhappy to be down there in the gloom of the trees while I could see unending sunshine gleaming on the slopes above. So I soon abandoned all fungal thoughts and took to the hills. No sooner was I out among the rocks and the bracken than I was rewarded by the high spot of the day: 25 choughs circling and playing in the sunlight. Evidently they had found a rising column of warm air for gradually they spiralled ever higher. And as they gyrated, they were joined by two buzzards and a kite. For several minutes I watched potential predators and potential prey sharing a rare moment of warmth and sun. I followed the track gently upwards for a long way but eventually it curved up into a high shadowy valley I had no desire to enter. So, keeping in the sunlight, I retraced my steps down to the woods and the thunder of the waterfalls.**

# For the love of dog

TELEVISION
**Nancy Banks-Smith**

*WHEN IT* comes to going overboard, only Robert Maxwell makes a bigger splash than Anthony Thomas. You may remember his Death of a Princess. Silver-haired grandees in the Foreign Office, who had golden ringlets the day before transmission, certainly do. As the princess was Saudi, this film nearly tied a knot in our oil line.

His name on a film, which he invariably writes, narrates, produces and directs, is a signal to fasten your seat belt. It'll be good and good-and-bumpy.

*Man and Animal* (Carlton) was sometimes pure pain to watch. In Guam's, a south China restaurant famous for its dog and cat cuisine, a small white cat was dropped in boiling water, skinned and thrown aside.

It moved. It breathed.

There was a desperate voice off camera: "The thing is still alive, Anthony! The cat's still alive!" I never heard a cameraman's professional detachment fracture like that before.

They had gone to the restaurant tooled up for secret filming, but there was no need. Guam's were happy to show them everything. In this they differ from modern factory farms and abattoirs, which set the dogs on you.

Half a world away Eleanor Zwicker was weeping over the grave of her Maltese terrier, Scruffy. She had brought him fresh carnations and a little American flag.

(Gravestones are rewarding reading. I always liked "Bruce, born a dog, died a gentleman", because it is so British, and the epitaph on a mule, "He done his durndest, no angel could do more", because it's so American.)

Scruffy died 10 years ago and Eleanor makes a four-hour journey every day to visit his grave. Thomas took the trouble to go home with her to the Bronx and it was illuminating. She lived alone on the 19th floor of a tower block. A good looking woman of, perhaps, 60, who never smiled once. "After Scruffy died," she said, "I just felt there was no reason for me to live. They said 'It's only a dog' and I said 'It's my baby. I buried a child'. He was my love, my life, my protector. He was everything."

Animals have perfect pitch. Tap any dog on the head and it will ring back pure dog, but to Mrs Zwicker it's a child and to Mr Guam it's chow.

In Spain anything with horns is for it. Every year there are some 4,000 blood fiestas. On the feast of St John the Baptist, a bull, pin-cushioned with darts, was tormented through the town to die at the door of the cathedral. As darkness deepened on the feast of St Francis of Assisi, a bull's horns were set on fire. An image of Guernican grandeur and agony.

To the criminal lunatics of Oakwood Penitentiary, Ohio, a llama, a goat and a duck are their only friends. Since they have kept animals, suicide, aggression and self-mutilation have been strikingly reduced. "Murderers, rapists, child molesters, lower functioning retarded folks. Nothing has ever shown them any respect or given them any play at all," said their doctor. "Finally they run into an animal."

To George Boyle, a quadriplegic, his monkey Gismo is his body. She changes his video tapes, files his papers, brings him drinks. In her spare time, she grooms his eyebrows. He said: "She knows if I'm sick. She knows if I'm happy. She's just like a daughter. If anybody tried to hurt her, I'm not much but they'd have to deal with me."

To devotees in Rajasthan, rats are reincarnated relatives and, if they want to nest in your turban, you don't argue. A priest at the rat temple said "You only have to drink their leftover water or milk to be cured of plague, TB, anything." He had, you couldn't but notice, rather a sharp face and strong teeth.



Muscle clamp . . . Famke Janssen gets to grips with Pierce Brosnan in Goldeneye

# Shaken and rather stirring

CINEMA
**Derek Malcolm**

*SIX YEARS* is a long time ago, but the first thing to say about the new Bond adventure is that it won't be as long again before the next one. Goldeneye already looks like becoming a box-office hit in America and it doesn't take a prophet to suggest that the same will happen in Britain.

Why? The main reason is that Goldeneye, cleverly and with thorough professionalism, delivers the familiar goods while changing the packaging a little. It manages the trick of appealing to those for whom tampering with the formula is akin to treason while providing something a little more politically correct for the nervous nineties.

This 007, played by Pierce Brosnan, performs incredible stunts, kills his enemies with the same, almost careless abandon, and wows his women with as much insouciance as ever. But just to put him in his place, he's commanded by a female M (Judi Dench) who calls him a "sexist, misogynist dinosaur, a relic of the cold war" and is reminded by Izabella Scorupco, the Russian girl who fancies him that, if a lack of real love in his spy's life has kept him alive, it has also kept him alone. "Boys with toys," she mutters as he plays about with one of Q's more fanciful lethal weapons.

The basic story, on the other hand, is orthodox post-cold war stuff. It starts with a mission to destroy a Soviet nerve gas facility where 007 has to decide whether to save 006 (Sean Bean) or abort the mission, continues with the skyjacking of a top-secret Nato helicopter and the ensuing destruction of a space weapons research centre within the Arctic circle, and ends with Bond defeating the Russian Mafia and Janus, the bossman plotting to destroy the information superhighway, thus sending the world economy back to the stone age.

No one could say that the plot wasn't forged out of conventional Bond material. Nor that the fantasy hasn't a tinge of realism to give an edge to its absurdity. That's the strength of the movie. It gives its audiences what they've always wanted, while obliquely suggesting that Ian Fleming's hero is a bit of a cad by modern standards. The women in the film are given enough rope, if not to hang the man, at least to throttle him a little when he gets too cheeky. It's a bit of a shame that Dench has so little to do.

Perhaps the stunts in this sort of thing are more important. And they at least are certainly up to scratch. They start early on, in time-honoured tradition, with a spectacular bungee jump down a huge Soviet dam, followed by an amusingly fantastical skydive after a plunging plane which enables it to rise up again in the nick of time. Later we have Bond driving a large Russian tank through St Petersburg in pursuit of the villain's car, destroying half the city in the process, including a huge statue of Pegasus. All this and more conclusively proves that a British film doesn't necessarily have to bow to Hollywood in matters of all-consuming special effects.

As for the sex, which in Bond movies goes so far but no further, the most effective passage comes when the rampaging villain (Famke Janssen) attempts to crush Bond between her thighs, thus obtaining a first-class sexual release and the death of an enemy at the same time. Seldom has the French expression for orgasm, "le petit mort", seemed so apt.

But the chief weaknesses are that Goldeneye is about 10 minutes too long (a common enough fault these days) so that its second half scarcely matches its first, that the handsome Brosnan looks and seems a bit like a Rotarian Bond, with less strength than Connery, less suavity than Moore and less acting ability than Dalton. But he's not another Lazenby, and that's a relief. He'll probably grow into the part.

Not even the most cautious members of the Chinese Film Bureau could object to Zhang Yimou's **Shanghai Triad**, a luxuriously mounted psychological thriller set in the decadent capitalist past. It is perhaps just as well, since To Live got Zhang into trouble and any further provocation might have blighted his career for good.

The slightly grudging respect for the film at Cannes seemed churlish as its visual beauty is always more than incidental. Gong Li appears as the cabaret singer mistress of a fearsome godfather. She lives with him when not vamping it up on the stage. She's a bitch, but perhaps has a heart of sorts.

A 14-year-old boy arrives from the country and gets taken on as a servant. We see everything from his bemused standpoint as the godfather is forced to leave Shanghai for an island safe haven, where the peasants quietly watch a tale of deception and intrigue unfold. At the centre of it all, Gong Li provides a performance of subtlety despite seeming a little strained in the song-and-dance sequences. The film amounts to less than most of Zhang's previous films, but it is still the product of a director at the height of his visual powers.

Antonioni's **L'Avventura**, a 145-minute, black-and-white exposition of middle-class alienation, circa 1960, is a classic which speaks to us as eloquently today as it did then.

The landscape is as important as the languorous characters, elucidating their state of mind and fashioning their responses. Antonioni creates an extraordinary, dislocated world — beautiful to look at, cumulatively powerful and unnerving in its gaunt exposition of its themes. And in the ravishing Monica Vitti he had the perfect star.

# Zeppelin's fifth man

OBITUARY
Peter Grant

*PETER GRANT*, who has died of a heart attack at the age of 60, was the most colourful and influential manager in the history of rock. He may never have quite become a household name, like Elvis Presley's manager Colonel Parker, or the Beatles' manager Brian Epstein, but within the industry itself, the man who guided the career of Led Zeppelin was regarded with awe and admiration.

He was a legendary figure, who combined being a heavy-duty Robin Hood with shrewd business skills. He was a fearsome — even terrifying — opponent, but always on the side of his artists.

His friend Mark St John, currently the manager of the Pretty Things, explained how he fought for his musicians' rights. "He would intimidate the living shit out of people, but only if absolutely necessary. He went in for verbal violence, an explosion of sheer power that stopped just short of physical aggression, and that did the trick. But at the same time, he was an absolute gentleman. He had integrity. He was a big man without fear." Musicians loved him because he used these powers for their benefit. He acquired a reputation for loyalty and honesty — rare qualities in the early days of the music industry.

Grant was a physical giant. Six foot five inches tall and weighing at least 250lb, he had been born into a poor family in the East End of London. He left school at 14 to work in a sheet-metal factory and then as a runner on Fleet Street. After National Service in the army, he became a professional wrestler and was once film double for Robert Morley.

Moving into the music industry, he helped to arrange concerts by great rockers like Chuck Berry, the Everly Brothers and Gene Vincent. Subsequently, he managed a wide range, from the Yardbirds to the New Vaudeville Band, and by the late sixties he was ready to transform the music industry with Led Zeppelin, the British "super-group" which included Jimmy Page and Robert Plant.

The seventies was Grant's era, and his music career effectively ended in 1980, with the death of his close friend, the Zeppelin drummer John Bonham. The remaining members of the band, and their manager, decided to their credit that Zeppelin should no longer continue.

Grant retreated to his estate in Sussex to spend time with his two children, and develop his passion for collecting classic vintage cars. But he wasn't forgotten — the International Managers Forum awarded him a Lifetime Achievement Award.

The most fitting tribute came from Phil Everly of the Everly Brothers, at a party after a recent Albert Hall concert. He introduced Grant to the other guests by saying: "This man made it possible. Without his efforts, musicians had no careers. He was the first to make sure the artists came first, and that we got paid and paid properly."

**Robin Denselow**

Peter Grant, rock manager, born April 5, 1935; died November 21, 1995





# A fit of piqué

What is the next step for the Royal Ballet after the departure of leading male dancer Zoltan Solymosi and the wanderlust of its star, Darcey Bussell? **Dan Glaister** reports

*WANTED:* lithe, male dancer, must be over 6ft tall. Good English an advantage. Ability to make ladies swoon essential, as is a patient and understanding manner with co-workers. Performance-related salary.

No, you will not be seeing this advertisement in the classified section of the Covent Garden Advertiser. Things don't happen that way in the world of ballet. The latest blow to Britain's best-known company, the Royal Ballet, was slipped out in a quiet press release last month: Zoltan Solymosi, the dashing male star of the corps, had been sacked. In the best tradition of artistic spats, the reasons cited for the star performer's abrupt departure were "irreconcilable differences" with the company's artistic director, Anthony Dowell, and other senior artistic staff.

The timing was not ideal. Last week Hungarian-born Solymosi was due to partner the company's home-grown star, Darcey Bussell, in Balanchine's Apollo. Luckily there is a replacement waiting in the wings — Jonathan Cope, Bussell's former partner, who Solymosi was originally brought in to replace.

Behind the anodyne press release telling the ballet world of the dancer's unexpected departure, things were less than harmonious. Solymosi, according to "backstage gossip" — the dancing equivalent of sources close to the minister — objected to the choreography for Apollo, choreography controlled by the Trust of the late Russian choreographer, George Balanchine. During rehearsal at Sadler's Wells, Solymosi reportedly gave his opinion on the work. It was, he told anyone within earshot, "a load of shit". Solymosi had reputedly been warned before about his rudeness. This time was to be his last and he was dismissed by Dowell, a man not normally renowned for his firm handling of unruly artistes.

The Hungarian's "volatile" dancing style is said to be matched by his off-stage persona. Handsome and romantic, he has appealed to audiences with his strutting machismo; not so the critics. One described his performance as Prince Siegfried in Swan Lake as reminiscent of "a head waiter with delusions of grandeur", while his Count Albrecht in Giselle was lambasted by the Times for being "so self-congratulating that it would have been hilarious had this been a comedy. He preened like a male model and posed artfully like a man practising for his own nude centrefold."

Solymosi discovered to his cost that no dancer is indispensable. "Stylistically he has not really fitted in," says Edward Thorpe, former dance critic of the Evening Standard and close follower of the Royal Ballet. "He was brought in for his size. He was always a strong partner — it's nice for a ballerina to be lifted by someone built like a truck driver. But I've rarely seen anyone so self-conscious on stage. He stood out in the company like a sore thumb."

No more *pas de deux* . . . Solymosi and Bussell in Manon (1992)

Troubles with the staff are nothing new in ballet. While the Royal may have removed this particular problem, there are others waiting in the wings: Viviana Durante, a rising star to rival the big names, has made no secret of her discontent with the day-to-day running of the company and her desire to advance her career elsewhere; Irek Mukhamedov, the defector from the Bolshoi and who was one of Bussell's earlier partners, is getting on, while the prima donna-like antics of French dancer Sylvie Guillem have assumed the proportion of myth.

*YET THE* biggest problem for the Ballet may lie with its biggest star. Darcey Bussell, heavily courted by the New York City Ballet, now wants to save herself for the more glamorous — and challenging — international stage. But there is more to Darcey than ballet. She auditioned — unsuccessfully — for the Audrey Hepburn part in a remake of Sabrina, opposite Harrison Ford; her picture is in the National Portrait Gallery, she's got an OBE and she's even done French And Saunders on telly... What more could an aspiring ballerina ask for? Well, quite a lot, actually.

Bussell's problem is the company's problem: she needs new roles. She's already performed the major roles, and finds herself with a company obsessed with Beatrix Potter at Christmas. The only relief comes in the shape of American choreographer Twyla Tharp, who premieres a Rossini ballet with the Royal in December. "I'm sure they might let her go for a season," says Thorpe. "After all, Dowell went to the American Ballet for two years. She'll certainly want to go if roles aren't written for her."

The Royal Ballet shares its home with the Royal Opera. The name of the building — the Royal Opera House — betrays which company has the upper hand. In business terms it makes a lot of sense, especially for the opera. Big tenor names, for instance, cost money. Big money. The opera-ballet partnership brings audiences in. And if the form is to make money, the content is predictable: "You can always fill a theatre with Swan Lake: good, bad or indifferent," says Thorpe. "It's a fail-safe formula."

Fail-safe, but hardly pushing the bounds of artistic endeavour. The Royal Ballet only has one new choreographer of note, Matthew Hart, whose acclaimed working of Peter And The Wolf is reprised for Christmas.

When Dowell arrived as director in 1986, he turned the dancing around, but now has a strong company — even without Solymosi — in need of a challenge. Dowell's attempts to redress the balance have foundered: Michael Clark's proposed new work for the company a year ago fell foul of his working habits, while plans to work with American choreographer William Forsyth never materialised.

So where now for the Royal Ballet? The dancers don't appear too happy, the management is clumsy and the company is losing its reputation for exciting, challenging work. Compare it with the New York City Ballet — more than 50 different works in its current season, admittedly many with low overheads — and the Royal Ballet appears a rather sad affair. The only hope would seem to lie with its new home, once the refurbishment of Covent Garden is completed and the Ballet can move all of its operation under one roof. But even then, the building will still be known as the Royal Opera House, and although there will be a second stage for the Ballet to use it will remain at the back of the queue for on-stage rehearsal time.

Perhaps the Royal Ballet and British ballet in general should take a leaf out of opera's book. Having succeeded in reinventing itself in recent years, opera is now the chosen highbrow art form for high, low and middlebrows. Like opera, ballet has the star élite. Who knows, with the right management, ballet could replace the fat lady in the public esteem with a series of very thin ladies.

# For Beatlemaniacs only

**Caroline Sullivan** on the much-hyped new anthology of the Fab Four

*WHO WANTS* a collection of scrappy old Beatles demo tapes, TV recordings, and studio out-takes that until now were not considered worth releasing? Everyone. Or so thinks Apple/EMI Records, which brings us the first of a trilogy of same (last year's radio recordings, The Beatles Live At The BBC, are a separate set).

Convinced the world is so keen to get its paws on yet more Beatles stuff, EMI used armed guards to protect **Anthology 1** (Apple) before release. Apparently, this was in case anyone heard in advance the double CD's first track, "Free as a Bird", the Beatles' first "new" single since they split up. This was Lennon's unfinished song from 1977, polished up by the remaining three last year.

As such, it has historical significance, and EMI is entitled to gloat. The company is charging full price even though the majority of the other 59 tracks are of scant interest to anyone but obsessives. How desperate are you to hear take three of I'll Be Back, which has been "altered from 3/4 to the 4/4 tempo approaching the master version"? Why not just put the whole lot out as a bargain-priced odds'n'sods set, and save the hand-tooled luxury pack for worthier Beatlesabilia?

The genuinely interesting artifacts could have been released as an EP, which would have saved listening to the rest. Most of them are at the beginning of the set, spanning 1958-64.

But before that we have "Free as a Bird", possibly the most mediocre single the group has ever released. Produced by, oddly enough, Jeff Lynne of ELO and the Traveling Wilburys, it's festooned with his hallmarks, most notably vacuous West Coast mellowness. Lennon's voice and piano have been augmented by bass, drums and Harrison's slide guitar. Lennon's vocal leads the way, but he left the lyric unfinished, so McCartney sings lines of his own — "Whatever happened to/the life we once knew?/Can we really live without each other?" — the sentimentality of which would have revolted Lennon. Hence, Christmas number one, for sure.

That hurdle past, the next half-dozen items are interesting. There are the only two recordings by the pre-Beatles Quarrymen, a cover of That'll Be The Day and In Spite Of All The Danger, a McCartney/Harrison composition. The sound quality is terrible — it was recorded in a living room.

The rest? There are novelty numbers, like the Latino Besame Mucho, a session with Morecambe and Wise and snippets of old interviews. Some out-takes were apparently included solely because they contain some minor variation on the master version — laughter during a chorus or Paul shouting that he couldn't play without his plectrum on One After 909. Reflecting their love of American black music, there are exuberant, but unextraordinary covers of R&B hits like Kansas City and Hallelujah, I Love Her So.

There is rarely a hint of what was special about the Beatles. Most of the material, however, comes from the Beatlemania era, when the demands upon them were monstrous. It's remarkable they sound as spirited as they do. But one expects more than spiritedness when paying over £20, and it happens just twice, on She Loves You and I Saw Her Standing There. Here at last are the Beatles in all their foolish splendour. There's no excuse for the rest.

*Adam Sweeting adds*: When he released Human Touch and Lucky Town in 1992, Bruce Springsteen was declared dead and buried. But time goes on, and suddenly **The Ghost of Tom Joad** (Columbia) is being hailed as a timely and poetic masterpiece. It's a set of spooky, finely-observed stories suggesting that for Bruce, the greatest success is creative freedom. A couple of lines in the title tune set the New Depression tone — "families sleepin' in their cars in the Southwest, no home no job no peace no rest".

Elsewhere, he sings about a jailbird tempted back to crime, about Texan racists, illegal Mexican immigrants cooking up speed in California, and rust-belt blues in Ohio. In Highway 25 or Dry Lightning, it's as if James M Cain had picked up a guitar, while My Best Was Never Good Enough sneers at Forrest gormless Gump and his cretinous moralising. It's a compelling collection, even if it cries out for a couple of mood-lifting pop songs.

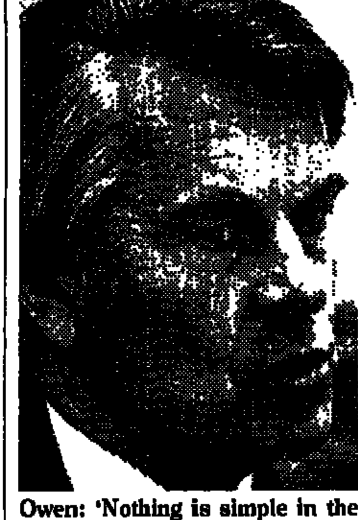
# Clouds over a moral high ground

**David Fairhall**

Balkan Odyssey
by David Owen
Victor Gollancz 394pp £20 (plus CD-Rom: £25 or £150)

*THE MUSLIM* commander in Mostar is overheard on the radio, negotiating to buy shells from enemy Serbs to fire at his more immediate enemies, the Croats. The deal is struck in Deutschmarks but involves some awkward transport across the front-lines. So the Muslim says, on second thoughts — if I pay you a few extra Deutschmarks and give you the target co-ordinates, perhaps you could also fire the shells? This (authentic) story aptly illustrates the words with which Owen opens his account of three miserably inconclusive years as a peace negotiator: "Nothing is simple in the Balkans." Never, in 30 years of public life, had he worked in such a climate of "dishonour, propaganda and dissembling".

But does the evident complexity and duplicity of this war also justify the failure, not just of Owen and his fellow-negotiator, Cyrus Vance, but of the European Community governments, their American ally and the United Nations, to bring it to an end sooner? What if Nato had bombed the Serbs earlier? Or the Bosnian arms embargo had been lifted? Or the US had committed ground troops instead of simply



Owen: 'Nothing is simple in the Balkans' PHOTOGRAPH. DON McPHEE

threatening punitive action from the air?

Answering such questions — if it can be done at all — should be the main value of a book like Balkan Odyssey, with or without the additional television footage and archive material on the accompanying CD-Rom. It may satisfy our curiosity about, for example, the psychology of a butcher like the Serb commander General Mladic (Owen sums him up as a "public bully, private calculator", who views the prospect of fighting into the 21st century "with total equanimity".) And for the author himself, it is a chance to justify his actions. But the important readers are those busy in Washington, New York, London and Brussels drawing conclusions from this conflict, conclusions which will be applied as doctrine at the beginning of the next intervention. There is a danger that, in its crudest form, the new doctrine will conclude: US air power works; UN peacekeeping doesn't.

Owen's emphasis on complexity is an antidote to such oversimplification. First, in self-justification, he still believes lifting the arms embargo which deprived Bosnian Muslims of weapons had more disadvantages than advantages. In his view, it was "never a clear-cut moral issue". The Muslims got most of the weapons that the Croats would allow them anyway.

But Owen says he twice favoured using air power to help impose a peace settlement — in May 1993, when the Vance-Owen plan was still on offer, and in the summer of 1994, when it would have been a modified Contact Group plan — that would have involved pulling out the UN and lifting the arms embargo.

He does not claim the Vance-Owen plan for an ethnically divided Bosnia was just; merely that things were bound to get worse, especially for the Muslims, if it could not be agreed and imposed. Instead, we now have "a soldiers' map" drawn up by the Croatian army, which drove 150,000 Serbs out of Krajina, and the Bosnian Serb militia, who "cleansed" the unsafe havens of Srebrenica and Zepa of 50,000 Muslims.

The main responsibility for this devastating delay in forcing a settlement, according to Owen, lay in Washington. He accuses the Clinton administration of wanting power without responsibility — "moralising from the high ground while their military stayed in the air". Until recently, the State Department insisted on drawing the conflict in caricature: Serbs black, Muslims white. Now the Americans have belatedly intervened behind the Croatian ground offensive, using air power to back their diplomacy. Owen rightly stresses the danger of making the UN the scapegoat for earlier failures. He exposes the deep confusion, even among UN commanders, between what air power can do (bombing a railway bridge) and what it cannot do (silencing a mortar threatening Sarajevo market). That confusion will live to fight another day.

Owen's most specific suggestion for restoring the UN's credibility is to make membership of the Security Council conditional on contributing troops to a permanent, quickly deployable peacekeeping brigade. If all those government delegations pontificating from New York had had troops at risk on the ground the sort of diplomatic fantasy which created the Bosnian "safe areas" might have been avoided. On that occasion, UN commanders asked for 35,000 troops to implement the resolution; New York offered 7,500; a year later, only 1,500 had arrived.

This is essential reading for those who always knew the simple answer.

## Paperbacks

Nicholas Lezard

**Unto the Soul, by Aharon Appelfeld, trs Jeffrey M Green (Quartet Encounters, £8.00)**

*A GREAT* and serious writer: his subject is the Holocaust, or, to be more precise, the shadows cast by it, or the steps leading to it. This, his latest novel to be translated into English, is about a brother and sister, custodians of a Jewish cemetery on a mountaintop, driven nearly mad with the pressure of their responsibility, their duty to the dead (who include the martyred saints of some past pogrom), and their repressed incestuous feelings. In the village below, the Jews are being driven out. Appelfeld writes with the grace and simplicity of a fabulist. His stories exist in a strange territory between narrative and parable: never explicitly the latter, but with the force of undeniable truth.

**The Billiard Table Murders, by Glen Baxter (Bloomsbury, £5.99)**

*THE CAPTION* beneath a drawing of a man holding an enormous floppy tube under a night sky reads: "His suspicions were confirmed when he stumbled on a fragment of cannelloni in the rhododendrons." Ah, Glen Baxter. That whacky deadpan. The teasing surrealism. Remember how we found him so funny in the 1980s? (There was, mind you, nothing else to laugh about.) The kind of book your English teacher would announce that he read to let you know he had a sense of humour.

**Slow Death In Paris, by Denis Belloc, trs William Rodarmor (Quartet, £8.00)**

*A JUNKY* in Paris. He writes stories about "a kid in pain". He scores, shoots up, withdraws, scores, etc. He picks up men in toilets. Or they pick him up. Who cares? "Told with the skill and raw energy that have earned Belloc a place beside such writers as Jean Genet, William Burroughs and Joe Orton," says the publishers' blurb. Wrong! Belloc's place vis-à-vis Genet and Burroughs is outside in the corridor, awaiting a thrashing. It doesn't help that the translation sucks, too.

**Living Islam, by Akbar S Ahmed (BBC/Penguin, £6.99)**

*THE INSPIRATION* for a TV series of the same name, apparently, and the usual snow-job that the religion generally gets. Ahmed points out that Islam is a great, egalitarian, loving religion. This is undoubtedly true — you only have to read the Koran for five minutes to work that out. But if you want a critique of the despots who twist Islam for their own ends, then forget it. It is anodyne, preachy, and, in the way he speaks for those who would like to murder Rushdie, rather sick. Guess why Penguin are the publishers.



# Blinkered in the Med

**Philip Hensher**

The Pillars of Hercules: A Grand Tour of the Mediterranean
by Paul Theroux
Hamish Hamilton 523pp £17.50

*NOT MUCH* travel writing survives for long, and what does survive, survives because we are interested in the author. No one now reads the travel books of Smollett or Sterne, George Sand or Waugh, to find out about the countries they visited, but because of who wrote them. Travel writing is a peculiar waste of a genre, an occasion for writing rather than a subject. Its characteristic commonplaces invariably infuriate anyone who knows anything about the country.

The best travel writers make a virtue out of their own ignorance. The worst, assuring us that Polynesians are naturally cheerful, or that the pace of life in Akureyri is rather slow, have a curious sort of naivety.

If you thought that the purpose of travel writing was to inform you about a place, there would be no point in writing about the Mediterranean. No one could have equal sympathy with the whole area or be interested in all of it, from Torremolinos to Alexandria, from Tangiers to Dubrovnik. A writer trying to establish a distinctive mentality, would quickly realise that the beggars of Tirana might as well live on a different planet to the mink-clad matrons of Trieste.

In this huge book, Paul Theroux travels clockwise round the entire Mediterranean, "the most heavily-beaten path in the world", omitting countries only in the case of political impossibility: he gets to Bosnia, but not to Libya. There is plenty here to irritate; it sometimes seems like an anthology of travel-writer's clichés. Southern Italians believe in the evil eye; Frenchmen talk endlessly about appearances; the sadistic Spanish go to bullfights. All quite charmingly absurd, and, though Theroux is rarely surprised by a country and almost always finds in it what he expects to find, the parade of prejudice is so blatant as to be completely harmless. Nor is the lack of observation particularly worrying; it is surprising when Theroux, having travelled through Spain and Sicily, remarks on his arrival in Albania that it was "my first glimpse of Islam on this trip", but no more than that.

But when the prejudices move from sweeping generalisations to a lack of sympathy or interest, the book suffers. In Albania, listening to a former dissident's account of life under Hoxha, he is told that men were forbidden to grow beards. His response — "workers in Disneyland are forbidden to grow beards. And that's probably not the only obsession that Disney executives have in common with Albanian dictators" — must have been frankly offensive. And his comment to a man in Dubrovnik, "Tell me why American soldiers should get killed in your civil war", is meant to be unanswerable; but, in reality, it is only unanswerable by cynics.

The book is intended to be cynical, but it dismisses interest in a lot of what it focuses on without really


A local travels to work in Salamanca

engaging in anything else. In Spain "a poor old woman ate potato chips out of her handbag. A snotty infant clutched a paper bag. Two moustached nuns nodded as the train jogged on the tracks." The vagueness, ordinariness and inaccuracy of much of the observation reduces any kind of satirical bite, whether he is talking about German hikers "unintentionally auditioning for a production of The Private Life Of The Master Race", or English tourists "wearing socks under their sandals and demanding Watney's Red Barrel".

Theroux is an exceptionally talented novelist of American life, and the chapter in which he joins a cruise ship of wealthy Americans is full of sharp, disgusted observation. "The Mousers invented fabulous new destinations with their malapropisms, such as their cruise to 'Rio J DeNiro and Shiva, Fuji'. Most brilliant is a spectacular, amused rogue called Jack Greenwald, with his fake Household Cavalry tie and his mysterious expertises — "Kashmiri sapphires, or gold alloys, or oil embargoes". Of course, he's a familiar figure in literature, not least from Theroux's books, but the relaxed fondness of the portrait is unlike anything else here. It suggests that the famous travel writer might do better to stay at home and write about the familiar.

This fascinating, well-written and narrow-minded book is, in the end, the portrait of someone who travels from place to place, and is bored by everything new. One hero emerges from the book, and it isn't Theroux. It is the local man who tells him, "Although I haven't been to other places in Italy, I have been everywhere in Sicily." How wonderful to be satisfied with what you find at home, and not to be dulled by wandering.







# From the Planet of the Jews

After the assassination of Rabin, a new book points up the division between America's liberal Jewish community and the extremist right wing.
**Jonathan Freedland**
reports from Washington

Members of the extremist Kach group display their clenched fist symbol of defiance PHOTO MARTIN NANGLE

*ISRAEL* is examining its wounds after the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, but American Jewry is engaged in some equally grim self-examination. It is having to confront the fact that its much-admired liberal community, the Jewish world of Philip Roth and Arthur Miller, is not the whole story: that American Jewry has a fundamentalist underside which rejects everything the rest of them stand for. Worst of all, it is this extremist corner, not Israel itself, which created Kach, the radical movement that spawned the group of which Rabin's assassin, Yigal Amir, was a member.

It was Brooklyn, not Jerusalem, which produced Rabbi Meir Kahane, who remains, even in death, the spiritual mentor of the Jewish far right. Brooklyn, too, which provided the funds and personnel of the West Bank settler movement. And Brooklyn which last year gave the radical fringe its number one hero, the man whose samizdat biography was found on Yigal Amir's bookshelves: Baruch Goldstein, the doctor who walked into a Hebron mosque and killed 29 Muslim men bent in prayer.

A useful guidebook to this underworld within US Jewry has just appeared, with unwilled punctuality, in the US. Memoirs Of A Jewish Extremist by Yossi Klein Halevi — now a self-described "centrist" writer for the respected Jerusalem Report magazine — was published by Little, Brown the week Rabin was buried. It represents a tragically timely dispatch from the heart of Jewish darkness.

Halevi recounts his own career in the Jewish Defence League, Kahane's thuggish gang which wore berets, wielded baseball bats and preached a crass message of Jewish Power. In Halevi's day, the target was the then Soviet Union and its refusal to allow Jews to emigrate.

The JDL's methods were crude: harassment of Soviet diplomats, bomb scares, sabotage. On one occasion, Halevi threw plastic bags filled with chicken blood at dancers from the Ukrainian state ballet. At his peak, he was on the outer edges of a cell which wound up planting a smoke bomb and accidentally killing a woman — who happened to be a Jew.

The ethnicity of the victim is oddly appropriate. For what emerges from Halevi's book is the extent to which the Jewish extremists' favourite enemy is not the Arabs of the Middle East, nor even the Nazis of memory, but their fellow Jews. The very people one might expect to be admired are loathed. Like other "liberation" movements of the time, the JDL and its allies sneered at those who thought they did not need to be liberated. Halevi eschews offensive, racist language when talking about Arabs or blacks; but the argot he reserves for liberal Jews is vicious.

The extremists despise the apologistic craveness of the "tame Jews" they call "Nice Irvings". When Halevi and his chums see Jews holding a banner thanking Holland for defying Arab pressure and continuing to support Israel during the Yom Kippur war of 1973, they call the demonstrators "grovelling kikes". Just as the Black Panthers took delight in calling Uncle Toms "niggers", so Kahane's boys got a thrill bullying the "self-denying" Jews they saw all around them. On one occasion, Halevi and friends come across a Jewish dance troupe who dare to arrive in a Volkswagen. As punishment for this posthumous act of collaboration with Germany, Halevi's gang rolls the car down a hill, sending it crashing into a ditch.

Ultra-nationalists such as Halevi realised Jews were doomed to be forever "a people that dwells alone". The Holocaust had served as ultimate proof that Jews would never be accepted, that they were a "separate species" destined to inhabit their own "Planet of the Jews".

In this view, liberal Manhattan Jews — busy sending their children to Harvard, marching for civil rights or drawing pleasure from Barbra Streisand movies — are pathetically deluded. As Halevi writes: "We feared the *goyim* and wanted nothing to do with them; but we turned our hatred inward, toward the Jewish assimilationists, the traitors: the American Jews who were embarrassed to be 'too' Jewish, who laughed when a Yiddish word was mentioned in a joke as if that were itself the punchline; who turned an identity we'd been martyred for into vaudeville." There are sound sociological explanations for this gulf between the Jewish mainstream and its lunatic fringe. Many of the extremists are — like Halevi — children of Holocaust survivors, bitter about what they regard as the apathy of American Jewry during the Final Solution. Many are from poorer families which arrived in the US relatively recently: often feeling class resentment toward the older, more established New York Review of Books crowd.

Mainly, though, it is because the two communities' experiences are so different. While most US Jews go to ordinary schools, have regular jobs and watch Baywatch like everyone else, a tiny minority still live in latter-day *shtetls*.

Visit the Lubavitch-dominated Crown Heights part of Brooklyn, and you truly land on the Planet of the Jews. The local language is Yiddish, restaurants are separated according to milk and meat — just like the kitchen of an orthodox home — and the busiest building is the synagogue. In this world, the liberal underpinnings of mainstream Jewish America have no meaning. In particular, the extremists cannot understand the moderate Jews' acquiescence in what they regard as a subtle victimisation of the Jews. What the hardliners have in mind is the way "world opinion" seems to prefer dead Jews to living ones.

*THE RADICALS* have scorn for the Holocaust museum in Washington or for the Oscars lavished on Schindler's List. They do not want acclaim for Gorecki's Symphony No 3, or the Nobel prize for Elie Weisel. In their eyes, such plaudits — cherished by the American Jewish majority — are tokens of the world's affection for the Jews of grainy, black-and-white, archive photos: dead Jews. The right prefers Jews who wage wars and build settlements — because at least they are alive.

"I would much rather a Jewish state that's loathed by the world, than an Auschwitz that's loved by it," Kahane used to say. And his words guide the Jewish right to this day. They lambast those American Jews who take the above tributes as signs of acceptance as hopelessly naive. For Kahane and the young Halevi, such people were in the same category as pre-war German Jews, stupid enough to believe that a master's degree in the writings of Goethe made them truly German.'

The Holocaust dominates Halevi's book, just as it obsesses the Jewish far right. He opens with the bedtime stories of his father, a Holocaust survivor who lived in a coffin-size hole for more than a year. Like the crabby parent in the comic-book masterpiece Maus, Halevi Senior fed his infant son on the lessons of the Shoah, delivered in broken, immigrant English: the world hates you; Jews can only survive alone; periods of apparent peace are mere "intervals between holocausts".

Halevi grew up fixated by the Shoah. As a schoolboy, he and his friends (also the children of survivors) would chalk the blackboard not with lewd jokes but with the words, Arbeit Macht Frei, the slogan that decorated the gates to Auschwitz. At a punk gig, young Yossi could see only the death camps: bouncers "selecting" lines of people, stamping their arms with a tattoo.

This partly explains the hard-line adopted by the rest of the Brooklyn-raised extremists. They look at the PLO and do not see a "partner in peace", as Yitzhak Rabin did, but stormtroopers in *keffiyehs*. That's why Kach's slogan was "Never Again". That's why the Jewish settlers who so loathed Rabin put up posters bearing the number "6 Million and 130,000" — as if the handover of the West Bank to the Palestinians was tantamount to herding their 130,000 members into gas chambers. And that's why an effigy of Rabin brandished at right-wing rallies showed the peacemaker in full-dress SS uniform.

*THIS*, perhaps, is the fate of scarred people, their vision tricked by the optical illusions of pained memory. They looked at Yitzhak Rabin and saw the head of a latter-day Judenraat, one of the Jewish councils which presided over the ghettos during Nazi occupation. Hoping to save Jews, the Judenraaten ended up supervising their destruction. Viewed like that, Rabin became a "legitimate target".

Israel's first prime minister was fond of saying that the Zionist dream would not be fully realised until a Jewish policeman arrested a Jewish prostitute outside a Jewish brothel. The point was, of course, that the aim of Israel was the normalisation of the Jewish people, whose nature had, for two millenia, been distorted by exile.

Now Jewish policemen arrest Jewish assassins for killing Jewish prime ministers. The normalisers have won. The Jews are the world's victims no more. From now on they have the privilege of self-determination: they can be the victims of themselves. This will be a hard enough lesson to swallow in Israel. Among the previously cosy Jews of America, it may take even longer.

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## Chess Leonard Barden

***THE NEW YORK*** **public booed Garry Kasparov's quick draws with Vishy Anand, but the recent Credit Suisse Zurich tournament showed that he was really fatigued. Kasparov's play was listless and he finished only fifth, his lowest placing in 10 years as world champion.**

**In contrast, Nigel Short continued his improved form in one of the strongest ever tournaments, with a 2669 average rating: scores were Ivanchuk and Kramnik 7/10, Ehlvest and Short 6, Kasparov 5; and six others.**

**Short's final game was a zestful win, with a new idea to consider if you have trouble against the solid defence 1 e4 c6.**

**Nigel Short-Boris Gulko, Caro-Kann Defence**

**1 e4 c6 2 Ne2** Perhaps a more flexible version of Short's former preference d4 d5 3 e5. **d5 3 e5 c5 4 d4 Nc6 5 c3 Bf5 6 dxc5** Provoking complications. The natural reply Nxe5 7 Nd4 Bg6?(Bd7) 8 Bb5+ Nd7 9 c6 favours White.

**e6 7 b4 a5 8 Nd4 axb4 9 cxb4 Qc7 10 Bb5** Gulko now regains his pawn, but at the price of opening up the centre when Black's king's side is still undeveloped.

**Bxb1 11 Rxb1 Qxe5+ 12 Be3 Qc7 13 0-0 Be7 14 Bxc6+ bxc6 15 b5! cxb5 16 Nxb5 Qc6 17 Nd4 Qc8** Qxc5 18 Nxe6 would increase White's advantage. **18 Qb3 Nf6 19 Qb5+**

If Black could castle, he would be well in the game; but now Qd7 fails to 20 c6 Qc7 21 Qb7. **Kf8 20 Nc6 Ne4 21 Nxe7 Kxe7 22 Qb2!** Short makes every move count, anticipating Rd8 and Kf8 when Black crawls out of danger.

**Rd8 23 Qxg7 Rxa2 24 Rfc1 Rg8 25 Qe5 f6 26 Qh5 Rg7 27 c6 Kd6 28 c7 Ra8 29 Bf4+ e5 30 Bxe5+! fxe5 31 Qh6+ Resigns.** If Rg6 32 Rb6+ Kd7 33 Qxh7+ wins.

**Garry Kasparov-Vassily Ivanchuk, French Defence**

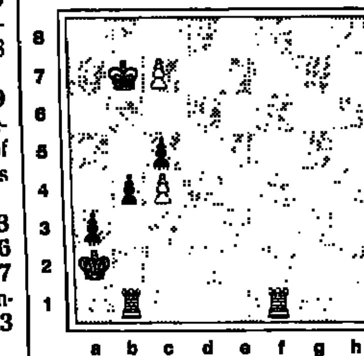
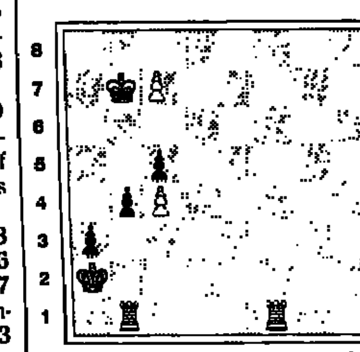
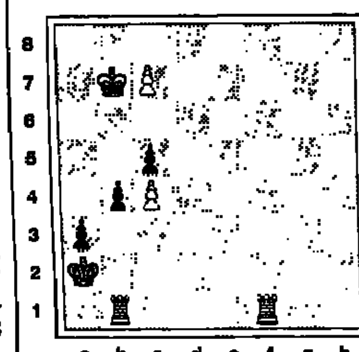
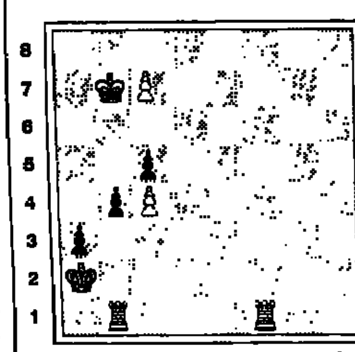
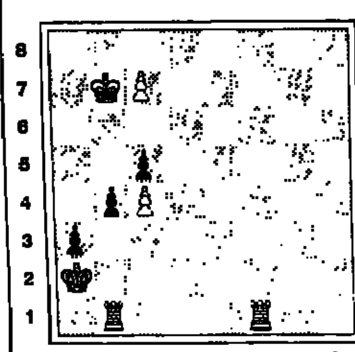
**1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e5 b6 5 a3 Bf8 6 Nf3 Ne7 7 h4 h6 8 h5 a5 9 Bb5+?**

Better 9 Bd3. **c6 10 Ba4? Nd7 11 Ne2 b5 12 Bb3 c5 13 c3 Nc6 14 0-0 Qc7 15 Re1 c4 16 Bc2 Nb6 17 Bf4 Be7 18 Bg3 Rb8 19 Nh2 Qd8 20 Ng4**

Kasparov is lining up for a mighty assault on the castled king, but on the battlefield which counts, from a4 to d4, Black has effective material superiority. **b4 21 axb4 axb4 22 cxb4 Nxb4 23 Bb1 Bd7 24 b3 Ra8 25 Rxa8 Qxa8 26 bxc4 Nxc4 27 Nc1 Ba4 28 Qe2 Qa7!** Elegant proof of the superiority of Black's knights and bishops: Black picks up the d4 pawn in broad daylight.

**29 Ne3 Qxd4 30 Nxc4 dxc4 31 Qf1 0-0!** Black is a pawn up. White's army is grovelling on the back row and the black rook is ready to join the battle. **32 Resigns.**

**No 2398**

**White mates in four moves, against any defence (by O von Krobshofer). A classic chessnut, which has defeated many solvers.**

**No 2397: 1 Bc6. If B any 2 Qh8, or Nf4 2 Bf2, or Rb7 2 Rc4, or Nb7 2 Re4, or d5 2 Be5. Traps are 1 Ba2 Rb7! or 1 Bf7 Be6! or 1 Be4 Nf4! or 1 Bf3/c4 Nb7! or 1 Nf4 Rb2!**

## Jenner's cure

ILLUSTRATION: GEOFF JONES

**Colin Luckhurst**

***DURING*** **1996, the Royal Mail will release commemorative issues of postage stamps featuring topics as varied as European football and the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust.**

**There will not, however, be an issue to mark the 200th anniversary of the discovery, by a Gloucestershire country doctor, Edward Jenner, of the process of vaccination which ultimately led to the disappearance of smallpox — an awful scourge in earlier centuries, socially undiscriminating in its spread, sometimes fatal, seriously disfiguring and often blinding.**

**Smallpox is also unique in the sense that it is the only disease which has been eradicated. So what Dr Jenner started might well have been seen to be deserving of a commemorative stamp. Not apparently a view shared by the Royal Mail.**

**Perhaps they can be persuaded to reconsider the matter in 2096 — the 300th anniversary. Probably not, as no one living then will be able to grasp the scale of the threat smallpox once represented.**

**However, notwithstanding this oversight, the Jenner Educational Trust works from Chantry (Edward Jenner's home from 1786 until his death in 1823) in Berkeley to keep his memory alive.**

**The village has been known in recent years for being the location of one of the first nuclear generators which ran, safely, for 30 years and is now being decommissioned. The shrinking sarcophagus lies to the west, but the village has its castle and the Jenner Museum.**

**I met Dr Ian Bailey, the chairman of the Trust, on an afternoon of pleasant autumn sunshine when he explained the historic medical achievement which Jenner pioneered.**

**Jenner had started as an apothecary and apprentice surgeon (the MD was subsequently awarded by the University of St Andrews to recognise his work) 225 years ago. Fame and recognition brought him grants from a grateful government and enabled him to establish consulting rooms in fashionable Cheltenham through the summer season.**

**Through observation of milkmaids in Chipping Sodbury and other milking parlours Jenner had surmised that the occupational groups who contracted cowpox (a mild infection) did not subsequently fall victim to the much more serious smallpox.**

**In 1796 he vaccinated a local youth with matter from pustules on the hand of a cowpox sufferer. The youth subsequently proved immune to smallpox and thus history was made.**

**Other 18th century attempts to achieve this protection included studies by Benjamin Jesty in Dorset and John Williamson in Eshaness, Shetland. Variolation — deliberate infection with smallpox — was also tried at the time, but it was Jenner's success with his youthful patient in Berkeley that marked the clinical breakthrough.**

**For Jenner, the freedom of the City of London followed in 1805 and, as noted, generous sums from the Exchequer were forthcoming as the government realised the significance of his achievement.**

***EVEN THOUGH*** **it was now preventable, smallpox remained extant until well into the present century. Photographic records graphically illustrate the disturbing disfigurement the disease could wreak on the human visage and explains why in earlier centuries servants were advertised as having had or were suffering from the pox.**

**Vaccination, although resisted in some quarters, was built into the public health programmes of many countries from early in the 19th century and usually on a compulsory basis. The World Health Organisation intensified its eradication campaign in 1967 while the disease still raged intermittently in India, Africa and South America. The last case was recorded in Somalia in 1977, and in 1980 the WHO declared the disease eradicated.**

**Surely the debt we all owe the dedicated physician from Berkeley is worth the stamp of approval that lies within the gift of the Royal Mail.**

## Quick crossword no. 290

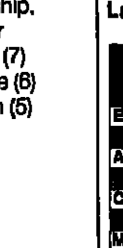
**Across**

1 Delight (6)
4 Happen (5)
7 Tree-like grass (6)
8 Help (6)
9 Trip (4)
10 Absurdity (8)
12 Thriving (11)
17 Small fleet (8)
19 Heap (4)
20 Banished (6)
21 Gather in (6)
22 Larceny (5)
23 Dropped — ebbed (6)

**Down**

1 Deciding contest (4-3)
2 Restriction (7)
3 Villain (9)
4 Fertile spot in desert (5)
5 Hair worn in a knot (7)
6 Decayed (6)
11 Yearning for the past (9)
13 Lionlike (7)
14 Endanger (7)
15 Sailing ship, trader or warship (7)
16 Influence (6)
18 Sluggish (5)

**Last week's solution**



I D S S
INDEEPWATER
L L S I R E
ELSE CASUALTY
U E S N R
ASTOUND AGAIN
I R D S E B
COMIC TEARFUL
N E A C T
MISNOMER JAIL
S T A E O O
TRANSACTION
L S Y N

## Bridge Zia Mahmood

*WHICH* of today's women's partnerships is the best in the world? If you asked that question of 100 top players, I believe half of them would vote for Karen McCallum and Kerri Sanborn of the United States, while the other half would nominate Sabine Auken and Daniela von Arnim of Germany.

It was, therefore, particularly fitting when these very pairs were members of the two teams contesting the final of the Venice Cup — the women's world championships — in Beijing.

All the smart money had been put on the tough and experienced Americans, who were expected to hang on to the cup once more.

But with 16 deals left to play, the German team held a slender lead of three IMPs.

On to Vugraph came the German pair of Auken and Von Arnim, into the Closed Room went the United States's McCallum and Sanborn, and the final countdown began.

Germany picked up a couple of swings on the early deals, but then came an opportunity for the American pair to fight back. East-West game, dealer East:

| | North | |
|---|---|---|
| | ♠K98 | |
| | ♥J7 | |
| | ♦Q96 | |
| | ♣QJ872 | |
| **West** | | **East** |
| ♠J764 | | ♠AQ532 |
| ♥10 | | ♥K3 |
| ♦J52 | | ♦A1084 |
| ♣A10954 | | ♣63 |
| | **South** | |
| | ♠10 | |
| | ♥AQ986542 | |
| | ♦K73 | |
| | ♣K | |

This was the bidding in the Open Room:

| South | West | North | East |
|---|---|---|---|
| Auken | Simon | Arnim | Munson |
| | | | 1♠ |
| 4♥ | 4♠ | No | No |
| 5♥ | Dble | No | No |

We were taught never to bid the same hand twice. Auken's five hearts was a serious breach of discipline which seemed likely to be expensive, for the bidding at the other table was identical up to West's four spades, but everybody then passed. Four spades had no chance, with a loser in each suit, while five hearts doubled might cost 500 if the defence did everything right.

Twelve IMPs to the US, right? Wrong. Simon led a spade against five hearts doubled, and Munson won with the queen and continued with the ace. Auken ruffed that and led the king of clubs, which Simon won to continue with another club. Suddenly declarer was in dummy, able to discard a diamond on the king of spades and take the heart finesse to escape for just one down and 100 to the US. Never mind, four spades would cost Germany another 100 in the Closed Room.

Five IMPs to the US, right? Wrong. Sanborn, South at the other table, led the heart ace against four spades by East. Sanborn switched to a diamond at the second trick, dummy played low — and McCallum played the nine! A stunned Beate Nehmert for Germany won that with the 10, threw dummy's other diamond loser on the king of hearts, and was writing down +620 moments later. Eleven IMPs to Germany.

The Americans could not recover and their 10-year hold on the cup was broken. Auken, von Arnim, Nehmert, Andrea Rauscheid, Marianne Mogel and Karin Caesar are the new champions of the world. ©





## Sports Diary Shiv Sharma

# King of the road

SUPER Scot Colin McRae was hailed as the King of the road after he lifted the world rally crown with a superb win in the Network Q RAC Rally in Britain last week. The victory, which made him the first Briton to earn the world title, meant the realisation of a driving ambition.

McRae and co-driver Derek Ringer extended their lead over Subaru team-mate Carlos Sainz by winning six of the last seven stages to clinch victory by 36 seconds after an enthralling four-day battle. At 27, McRae is the youngest ever winner of the title.

McRae: youngest ever champion

McRae and Ringer were greeted with horns and klaxons when they roared into Chester in triumph.

The only other driver who could have won this year's world title, Spaniard Sainz, was forced to settle for the runner-up position and second place in the championship.

McRae said after his victory: "It's a fantastic feeling. Winning the world championship was always my goal. It's great to have done it in my home rally."

A GOAL by substitute Paul McGregor spared the blushes of Nottingham Forest skipper Stuart Pearce and earned the only British team still chasing a European title the narrowest of leads to take into the second leg against Lyon in the Uefa Cup.

After Florent Laville was sent off for handling in the area Pearce saw his penalty saved by Pascal Olmeta, only for McGregor to fire in the rebound. Earlier, Olmeta stopped a fierce first-half drive by Pearce as Forest were kept at bay.

There was more disappointment for the two British clubs in the European Champions' League. Blackburn Rovers were given yet another lesson, this time by Spartak Moscow who beat them 3-0. Spartak went ahead in the 28th minute through Dimitri Alenitchev. Yuri Nikiforov inflicted further misery in the 47th minute before Ramiz Mamedov completed the job after 54 minutes. The match was marred by the sending-off of Colin Hendry for a bad foul 15 minutes from time and an on-field punch-up between Blackburn team-mates Graeme Le Saux and David Batty *(see page 32)*.

Rangers' hopes of reaching the quarter-finals disappeared as Steaua Bucharest hit back from an early Paul Gascoigne strike. The home side went ahead after 32 minutes when Gascoigne rammed home from 12 yards. But Adrian Ilie equalised after 55 minutes and left Rangers at the bottom of their group with no prospects.

GUNMEN brought terror to a boxing match in the black township of Guguletu, near Cape Town. British middleweight Warren Stowe was fighting South African Simon Maseko when armed robbers burst in and shot dead an official. The bout was cancelled and a terrified Stowe vowed later never to fight in South Africa again.

STEVE COLLINS retained his WBO super-middleweight crown for the second time with a victory over Cornelius Carr in Dublin. The 31-year-old Irishman, who sent Chris Eubank into retirement after beating him twice, won by a unanimous points decision but the 26-year-old challenger from Middlesbrough was no pushover.

SCOTTISH striker Rhona Simpson booked Britain's passage to next summer's Atlanta Olympics by scoring the only goal against South Africa in the women's hockey qualifying tournament at Cape Town. A draw against the hosts was enough, but Britain were determined to end the tournament on a high note.

GREG NORMAN'S five-year drought in his native country came to an end on Sunday when he won the Australian Open by two shots. Norman fired four birdies in the final seven holes on his way to a 68 for a 10-under-par total of 278. The former world number one, who last won the Australian Open 10 years ago, finished two shots clear of compatriot Peter McWhinney.

THE feud-riven world of international chess saw some grandmasterly moves last week. Florencio Campomanes, president of the International Chess Federation (Fide), was forced out of office. His replacement, Kirsan Ilumjinov, head of the Russian republic Kalmyk, was elected by a reported 98 votes to three. But as Campomanes's political obituaries were being written he was back in the newly-created post of chairman, with unspecified responsibilities.

STEPHEN HENDRY wrote himself into snooker's record books at Preston by becoming the first player to compile three maximum 147 breaks in top competitions. He stands to collect a £25,000 bonus for his efforts in the UK Championship.

SERGEI GRINKOV, former pairs ice-skating world champion, died of a heart attack, aged 28, while training in the US with his wife and partner, Ekaterina Gordeyeva.

YOUNG Jordan Williamson is to put his peculiar talent to good use by raising money for a cancer charity — the disease his grandmother is fighting. The five-year-old will sit at a table in his Newcastle school and name Premiership footballers — by looking at pictures of their legs.

## Football results and tables

**FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP**
Arsenal 0, Blackburn 0; Chelsea 0, Tottenham 0; Coventry 3, Wimbledon 3; Everton 2, Sheff Wed 2; Man City 1 Aston Villa 0; Middlesbrough 2, Liverpool 1; Newcastle 2, Leeds 1; Nottm Forest 1, Man Utd 1; Southampton 1, Bolton 0; West Ham 1, QPR 0

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Newcastle | 15 | 12 | 2 | 1 | 33 | 11 | **38** |
| Man Utd | 15 | 10 | 3 | 2 | 32 | 14 | **33** |
| Arsenal | 15 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 21 | 10 | **28** |
| Aston Villa | 15 | 8 | 3 | 4 | 19 | 11 | **27** |
| Tottenham | 15 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 22 | 17 | **26** |
| Middlesbrough | 15 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 14 | 9 | **26** |
| Nottm Forest | 14 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 24 | 21 | **25** |
| Liverpool | 15 | 7 | 3 | 5 | 27 | 14 | **24** |
| Leeds | 14 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 20 | 16 | **24** |
| West Ham | 15 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 15 | 16 | **20** |
| Chelsea | 15 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 14 | 17 | **20** |
| Everton | 15 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 19 | 19 | **19** |
| Blackburn | 15 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 23 | 17 | **18** |
| Southampton | 15 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 16 | 25 | **15** |
| Sheff Wed | 15 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 14 | 20 | **14** |
| Wimbledon | 15 | 3 | 3 | 9 | 19 | 33 | **12** |
| Man City | 15 | 3 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 22 | **12** |
| QPR | 15 | 3 | 2 | 10 | 11 | 23 | **11** |
| Coventry | 15 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 14 | 32 | **9** |
| Bolton | 15 | 2 | 2 | 11 | 14 | 30 | **8** |

**ENDSLEIGH LEAGUE: First Division:** Barnsley 1, Luton 0; Birmingham 2, Leicester 2; Charlton 2, Port Vale 2; Crystal Palace 0, Derby 0; Huddersfield 2, Wolverhampton 1; Ipswich 3, Portsmouth 2; Oldham 0, Southend 1; Sheff Utd 0, Reading 0; Stoke 1, Millwall 0, Tranmere 0, Grimsby 1; Watford 0, Norwich 2; West Brom 0, Sunderland 1

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Millwall | 19 | 9 | 7 | 3 | 23 | 17 | **34** |
| Norwich | 19 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 30 | 20 | **33** |
| Grimsby | 19 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 23 | 19 | **33** |
| Leicester | 19 | 9 | 5 | 5 | 31 | 26 | **32** |
| Birmingham | 19 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 30 | 22 | **31** |
| Sunderland | 18 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 21 | 15 | **31** |
| Tranmere | 17 | 8 | 6 | 3 | 29 | 16 | **30** |
| Huddersfield | 19 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 26 | 25 | **29** |
| Stoke | 19 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 29 | 24 | **28** |
| Derby | 19 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 28 | 24 | **28** |
| Barnsley | 19 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 24 | 30 | **27** |
| Charlton | 19 | 6 | 9 | 4 | 23 | 19 | **27** |
| Oldham | 19 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 27 | 22 | **26** |
| Ipswich | 19 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 32 | 30 | **24** |
| West Brom | 19 | 7 | 3 | 9 | 23 | 27 | **24** |
| Southend | 19 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 19 | 24 | **24** |
| Crystal Palace | 18 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 20 | 23 | **22** |
| Reading | 19 | 4 | 8 | 7 | 21 | 25 | **20** |
| Sheff Utd | 19 | 5 | 3 | 11 | 25 | 33 | **18** |
| Wolverhampton | 19 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 22 | 28 | **18** |
| Watford | 19 | 3 | 8 | 8 | 22 | 28 | **17** |
| Portsmouth | 19 | 3 | 7 | 9 | 26 | 34 | **16** |
| Luton | 19 | 3 | 6 | 10 | 12 | 25 | **15** |
| Port Vale | 19 | 2 | 8 | 9 | 20 | 28 | **14** |

**Second Division:** Brentford 2, Bradford 1; Bristol R 1, Stockport 3; Burnley 2, Wrexham 2; Carlisle 4, Wycombe 2; Chesterfield 3, Bournemouth 0; Hull 2, Peterborough 3; Oxford 1, Crewe 0; Rotherham 2, Bristol C 3, Swansea 0, Notts County 0; Swindon 0, Shrewsbury 1; Walsall 1, Blackpool 1; York 3, Brighton 1.

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Swindon | 18 | 11 | 5 | 2 | 33 | 14 | **38** |
| Notts County | 18 | 10 | 5 | 3 | 30 | 16 | **35** |
| Crewe | 17 | 10 | 4 | 3 | 34 | 18 | **34** |
| Chesterfield | 18 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 27 | 19 | **30** |
| Wycombe | 18 | 7 | 8 | 3 | 27 | 20 | **29** |
| Blackpool | 18 | 8 | 5 | 5 | 25 | 19 | **29** |
| Wrexham | 18 | 7 | 7 | 4 | 30 | 22 | **28** |
| Burnley | 18 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 27 | 23 | **27** |
| Shrewsbury | 18 | 8 | 2 | 8 | 26 | 25 | **26** |
| Stockport | 18 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 22 | 16 | **26** |
| Bradford | 18 | 7 | 4 | 7 | 25 | 28 | **25** |
| Oxford Utd | 18 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 22 | 19 | **25** |
| Bournemouth | 18 | 7 | 4 | 7 | 19 | 22 | **25** |
| Peterborough | 18 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 25 | 28 | **22** |
| Bristol Rovers | 18 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 19 | 29 | **22** |
| York | 18 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 23 | 29 | **21** |
| Walsall | 18 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 20 | 17 | **21** |
| Bristol City | 17 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 17 | 22 | **21** |
| Rotherham | 18 | 5 | 5 | 8 | 23 | 32 | **20** |
| Swansea | 18 | 4 | 7 | 7 | 19 | 26 | **19** |
| Carlisle | 18 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 21 | 28 | **18** |
| Brentford | 18 | 5 | 3 | 10 | 14 | 24 | **18** |
| Brighton | 18 | 3 | 3 | 12 | 14 | 32 | **12** |
| Hull | 18 | 1 | 8 | 9 | 13 | 27 | **11** |

**Third Division:** Barnet 3, Leyton Orient 0; Bury 2, Exeter 0; Cambridge 1, Torquay 1; Chester 4, Darlington 1; Colchester 1, Mansfield 3; Gillingham 1, Fulham 0; Hereford 1, Cardiff 3; Lincoln 1, Northampton 0; Plymouth 2, Rochdale 0; Preston 3, Hartlepool 0; Scunthorpe 3, Scarborough 3; Wigan 2, Doncaster 0.

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chester | 18 | 11 | 4 | 3 | 37 | 20 | **37** |
| Gillingham | 18 | 10 | 6 | 2 | 25 | 6 | **36** |
| Preston | 18 | 9 | 8 | 1 | 41 | 18 | **35** |
| Rochdale | 18 | 8 | 5 | 5 | 32 | 20 | **29** |
| Plymouth | 18 | 8 | 5 | 5 | 31 | 21 | **29** |
| Colchester | 18 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 28 | 23 | **27** |
| Bury | 18 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 23 | 26 | **27** |
| Darlington | 18 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 19 | 17 | **26** |
| Doncaster | 18 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 19 | 25 | **26** |
| Wigan | 18 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 23 | 21 | **25** |
| Cambridge Utd | 18 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 29 | 31 | **23** |
| Leyton Orient | 18 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 21 | 25 | **23** |
| Scunthorpe | 18 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 26 | 22 | **22** |
| Exeter | 18 | 4 | 9 | 5 | 18 | 23 | **21** |
| Mansfield | 18 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 28 | 36 | **20** |
| Hereford | 18 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 21 | 23 | **20** |
| Barnet | 18 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 19 | 24 | **20** |
| Cardiff | 18 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 18 | 19 | **20** |
| Northampton | 18 | 5 | 5 | 8 | 18 | 19 | **20** |
| Fulham | 18 | 3 | 10 | 5 | 22 | 22 | **19** |
| Scarborough | 18 | 4 | 7 | 7 | 21 | 28 | **19** |
| Hartlepool | 18 | 4 | 7 | 7 | 16 | 28 | **19** |
| Lincoln | 18 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 17 | 33 | **17** |
| Torquay | 18 | 2 | 5 | 11 | 17 | 40 | **11** |

**SCOTTISH COCA-COLA CUP: Final:** Aberdeen 2, Dundee 0.

**BELL'S SCOTTISH LEAGUE: Premier Division:** Celtic 3, Hearts 1; Hibernian 1, Rangers 4; Motherwell 1, Falkirk 1; Partick 0, Raith 2.

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rangers | 15 | 11 | 3 | 1 | 34 | 10 | **36** |
| Celtic | 15 | 9 | 5 | 1 | 26 | 13 | **32** |
| Hibernian | 15 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 25 | 21 | **25** |
| Raith | 15 | 6 | 3 | 6 | 18 | 21 | **21** |
| Aberdeen | 14 | 6 | 2 | 6 | 22 | 18 | **20** |
| Hearts | 15 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 22 | 28 | **18** |
| Motherwell | 15 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 13 | 17 | **14** |
| Partick | 15 | 3 | 4 | 8 | 11 | 26 | **13** |
| Kilmarnock | 14 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 14 | 21 | **12** |
| Falkirk | 15 | 3 | 3 | 9 | 12 | 22 | **12** |

**First Division:** Airdrie 1, Dundee Utd 1; Clydebank 2, St Johnstone 0, Dunfermline 0, Greenock Morton 2; St Mirren 0, Hamilton 3. **Leading positions:** 1, Dunfermline (played 15, points 28); 2, Greenock Morton (15-27); 3, Dundee (14-27).

**Second Division:** Ayr 2, Montrose 0; Forfar 1, Berwick 4; Queen of South 0, East Fife 2; Stenhousemuir 0, Clyde 1; Stirling 1, Stranraer 1. **Leading positions:** 1, East Fife (15-33); 2, Berwick (16-27); 3, Stirling A (16-27).

**Third Division:** Albion Rvrs 0, Livingston 2; Brechin 1, Queen's Park 0; Caledonian Thistle 1, Alloa 1, Cowdenbeath 2, Ross County 0; East Stirling 0, Arbroath 1. **Leading positions:** 1, Livingston (16-33); 2, Ross County (16-26); 3, Brechin (15-26).

## Cricket

# Lara pulls out of tour to Australia

**BRIAN LARA has withdrawn from the West Indies upcoming tour of Australia. No reason has been given for the star batsman's decision to pull out, but Lara's request came the day after he, Carl Hooper, Curtly Ambrose and Kenny Benjamin were fined 10 per cent of their fees for misconduct during the last tour of England. Lara, who "absented himself" on tour, has been replaced by Roland Holder.**

**The West Indies board asked Lara to reconsider his request over the weekend when, it said, "every effort was made to persuade Brian that his participation was in his own interest and that of West Indies cricket".**

**● In Melbourne, Victoria thrashed Pakistan by eight wickets to deepen the tourists' gloom before the third and final Test starting this week in Sydney. Shane Warne has been named in Australia's 13-man squad, just 10 days after breaking a toe.**

**● Nine cricket fans were killed and nearly 50 injured when a stadium wall collapsed during the fifth one-day international between India and New Zealand in Nagpur on Sunday. The stadium is due to host a World Cup match in March.**

**Witnesses said a three-metre section of the wall appeared to give way in the crush of people trying to leave the top level of the stand after lunch. It was decided to carry on with the match. New Zealand won by 99 runs.**

**● England travelled to Johannesburg for the second Test starting this week, buoyed up by a seven-wicket victory over Orange Free State at Bloemfontein. England bowled out the home side for 201 and reached their target with ease, Alec Stewart making 81.**

## Rugby Union

# Climbdown over Five Nations switch

**Robert Armstrong**

THE Rugby Football Union is to float a new plan to stage the Five Nations Championship in March and April, after being forced into an embarrassing climbdown over its proposal to hold the oldest international competition in May.

A mixture of hostility and indifference from the other four countries to what was dubbed England's May madness, added to internal RFU opposition, ensured an early return to the drawing board.

When the Five Nations committee meets in London on December 12 it will hold preliminary discussions on the possibility of new dates for the championship, starting in the 1997-98 season when a new television contract will come into force. But it is far from certain that Scotland, Ireland and France will support a switch to early spring, though Wales is understood to be more flexible in its attitude.

Instead of garnering votes on the Five Nations committee the RFU has merely antagonised the other home unions, who are angry at not being consulted before the May concept was given a public airing. As for the French, who hold their national championship finals in May, their president Bernard Lapasset apparently gave a Gallic shrug and treated the suggestion as an elaborate English joke.

Closer to home, the Leicester president Peter Wheeler criticised Twickenham's lack of diplomatic skill, which could ultimately torpedo any proposal to change the traditional Five Nations dates in January, February and March. "There should have been round-table talks before the RFU commission announced what it wanted," he said.

Meanwhile, England's League One clubs and the RFU have moved closer to formal agreement on English entry into European club competition next season.

After months of mutually suspicious manoeuvring between the sides, Twickenham is set to agree to a quota of four clubs taking part in the tournament currently known as the Heineken Cup. This season clubs from Wales, France, Italy and Romania plus the Irish provinces have combined to float the inaugural competition.

The joint plan, initially formulated a year ago to admit a total of 20 clubs/provinces from the Five Nations plus Italy, and split them into four groups of five, will come into operation towards the end of next year. Those clubs in England and Wales who finish immediately below the top four in their respective league competitions will take part in a new Anglo-Welsh competition as compensation for missing out on the European money spinner.

Vernon Pugh, chairman of the Welsh Rugby Union, said he had had a positive response from the Heineken League First Division clubs, who agreed the changes.

The Scots will put three clubs into Europe next season. Like the English, the Scottish clubs are likely to be at loggerheads with their union over the distribution of income from the sale of TV rights, gate receipts and marketing ventures.